

The Sketch

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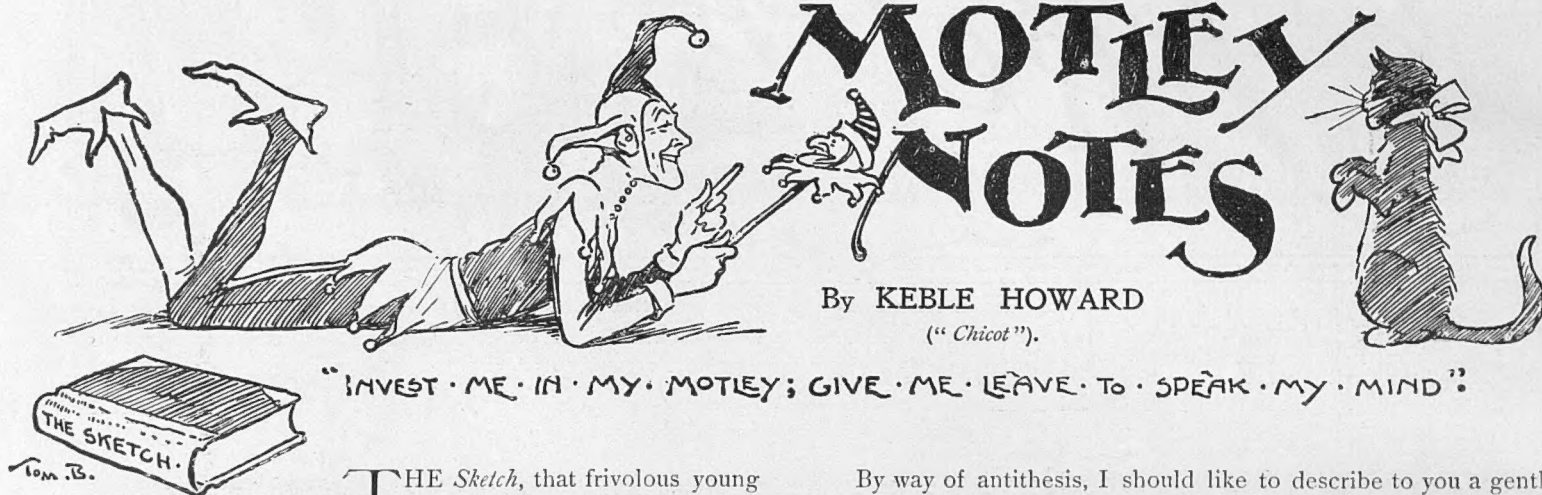
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17, 1903.

ONE SHILLING.



"SINCE SUMMER FIRST WAS LEAFY."—SHAKSPEARE.

DRAWN FOR "THE SKETCH" SUMMER NUMBER BY LEONARD LINDSELL.



THE *Sketch*, that frivolous young friend of ours, is in a fine state of excitement to-day. For the second time only in her gay little life she has been allowed to join her elder brothers and sisters in their summer festivities. Christmas she has always celebrated in tremendous style, for is not Christmas the children's Festival? But, with the exception of the Diamond Jubilee season, two merry-makings in one year have been looked upon as a superfluity of luxury for one already prone, by nature, to enjoy to the full the light side of life. However, now that she has been allowed to have her own way in the matter, I suppose this June-day junketing will have to become an annual affair. All the same, it has been fully impressed upon her that she has got to behave particularly nicely on this occasion, and take uncommon care to please those very good friends and patrons of hers, the Readers. To tell you the truth, that is why I am writing about her in these Notes, for the cunning little rogue has persuaded me to take her part and explain to everybody that she wishes them a very joyous summer and hopes they will approve the dainty adornments with which she has supplemented her usual costume.

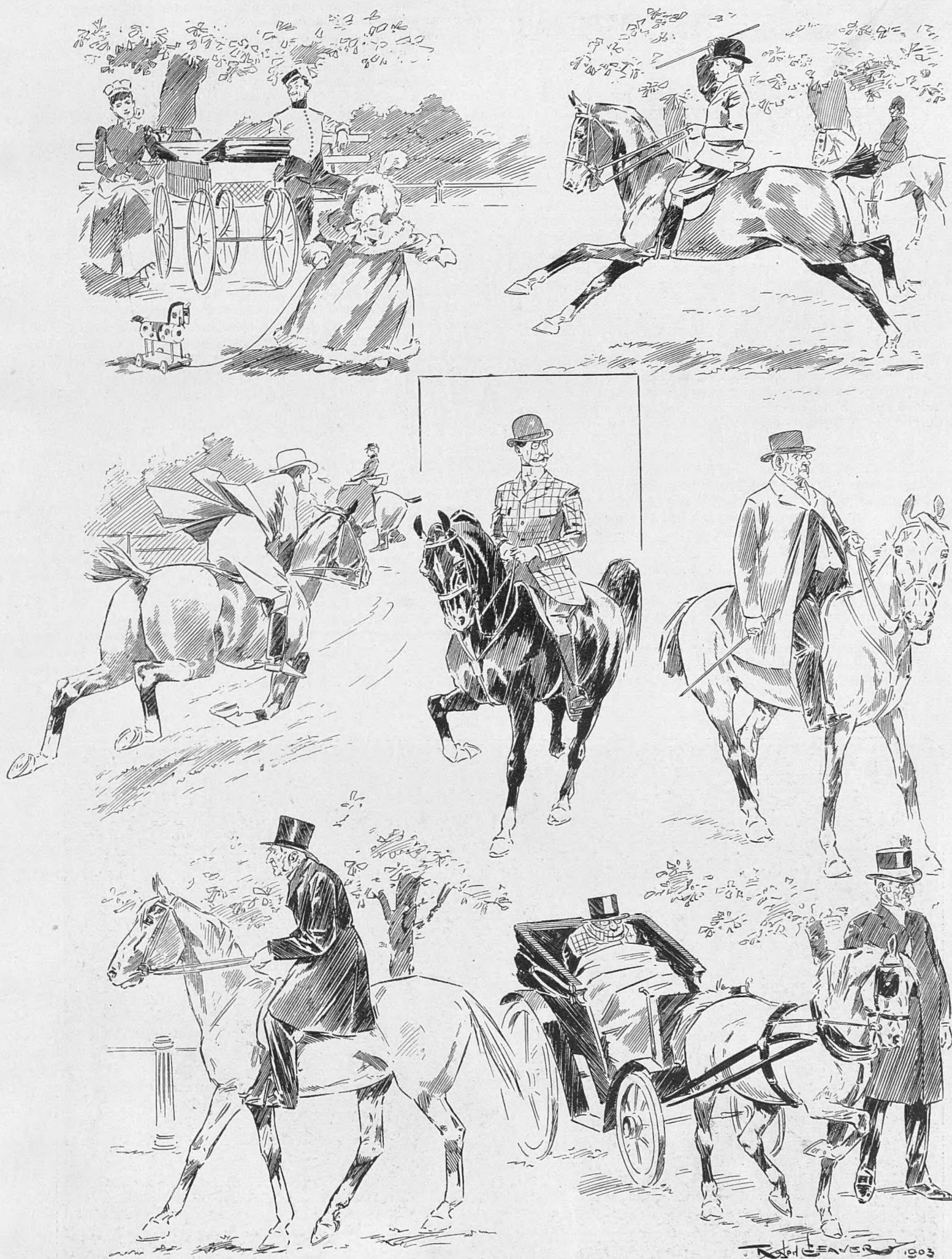
Speaking from a purely personal point of view, I am bound to admit that I never feel in the least inclined to add a stitch or a button to my costume during the months of summer. Rather do I long to throw aside my stiff collar, my formal shirt, my prim suit, and clothe myself in an old, soft flannel suit that calls to me daily from the bottom of a seldom-opened drawer. Sometimes, in a moment of weakness, I take the garments out, put them on, throw open my windows, light my pipe, and strive to imagine that the noise of the traffic is the roar of the sea surging to and fro over the fierce rocks or rattling the rounded pebbles on some solitary beach. Occasionally, very occasionally, I fall to sleep in such a mood, and then I am borne, in the arms of the summer wind, to a still, sweet spot where all the grasses of the field share my slumbers and every flower that blows is gardenized by the hand of God. Those are the hours that I love—those hours of sleep that are better worth than all the restless, striving days of waking. . . . And so the night passes, and I return to consciousness. There is a cold mist on the river; muddy-looking men are washing down the streets; beneath the window of my bedroom a parcel of noisy louts are grooming and bullying their horses. Faugh!

The matter-of-fact reader, I suppose, will laugh at me for my little outburst; but I have the satisfaction of knowing that there is one, at any rate, who would sympathise with me in this yearning mood. I need hardly say that I allude to Elizabeth Crabb, who is so far braver than I that, even at this moment, she is suffering martyrdom in the cause of the Nature-worshipper. Elizabeth is a Welsh girl who was born and brought up amid the mountains. A passionate desire to be alone with the pixies compelled her to leave home, and wander, for several weeks, through the wild scenery of the uplands and valleys in the neighbourhood of Ystrad. Gentle, sweet-souled Elizabeth, my heart goes out to you! Even from the centre of this turgid Babylon, I can see you striding fearlessly along the mountain-path, hear you singing to the wild winds some joyous ballad of freedom that has come to you as a mystic heirloom from your Celtic forefathers. But stay! What are those dark shadows that creep, creep behind you? Fly, sweet Elizabeth, fly! The police, instructed by your doltish parents, are about to drag you from your fairy kingdom. . . . Alas! They have caught her, she has been brought before the Magistrates of South Wales, and sent to jail for twenty-one days! Yet be cheered, Elizabeth, and know that we, who are able to understand, will be with you, in spirit, throughout these lonely weeks.

By way of antithesis, I should like to describe to you a gentleman with whom I had the good fortune to travel to town the other day. He swung himself into the carriage just as the train was moving out of the station, left the door open behind him, and straightway let down the opposite window with a bang. Then he dropped into a seat, took out his handkerchief, and flicked the dust from his boots. They were wonderfully-patent-leather boots, with ornamental tops. His trousers, for some occult reason, had thick seams down the sides, and his coat, poor thing, was split into two parts as far as the small of his back. His tie was bilious with yellow spots, and he wore a scintillating pin. In one hand he carried a nobbly cane, and in the other he grasped a sporting journal. Whenever anybody got into the carriage, he scowled, and he scowled when anybody got out. His nose was hooked, his eyes protruded from his head, whilst his chin—the only modest thing about him—was entirely hidden by the top of his collar. And yet, with all these natural and acquired disadvantages, he managed to combine the bullying air that is sometimes mistaken for force of character but is more often the token of a stunted intellect. There was, however, one saving grace about the fellow: he did not wear a Panama hat.

The man on the pavement, weary of railing against the scorching motorist, has now invented a craze of his own. He walks. In any street you may see him, and at almost any hour. You will know him by his swinging arms, his thick boots, his expanded chest, his gleaming eye. Of course, in comparison with the motorist, the damage that the scorching pedestrian is able to do to his fellow man is comparatively small. For all that, he is a considerable source of annoyance, and herein, I suppose, lies his reward. He does not, so far as I have been able to discover, walk with any desire to get anywhere. Neither is he a searcher after health. The walking craze, as I say, has come about simply as a protest against motorists. That is all very nice and proper, of course, but the worst of it is that the motorist does not care a rap. The man on the pavement can walk his feet off and the motorist will not turn to glance at him. The people who suffer at the feet of the scorching pedestrian are those who, like myself, are too poor to drive a motor and too weary to walk fast. Not only are we driven from the roads, but we are also driven from the pavement. The only safe course for us to pursue is a watercourse. Even there, we are likely to be knocked down and trodden underfoot by an army of sandwich-men. As "Nemo" says, Can nothing be done?

The terrible misfortune that has fallen upon Dan Leno has cast a shadow over the world of theatres and music-halls. On the stage, there was a peculiar magnetism about him that caused every member of his audience to regard him in the light of a personal friend. I have never exchanged more than a dozen words with the great little comedian in my life, and yet the news of his breakdown shocked and saddened me more than I can say. So far as I can understand, there is no reason why he should not, with rest and care, be restored to health, and even be able to return to his work of laughter-making. In the meantime, one is a little surprised to find that a certain number of those in the same profession are taking advantage of the catastrophe to concoct all sorts of ridiculous and extravagant tales about their colleague. Such gossip as this is in the worst possible taste; it also argues a lack of that *camaraderie* which has always been looked upon as one of the main virtues of the Bohemian. Esau, who sold his birthright for a mess of pottage, was a far more human person than the theatrical bar-loafer who is content to forfeit our esteem for the sake of raising a guffaw.



"THE SEVEN AGES" IN ROTTEN ROW.

SKETCHES BY RALPH CLEAVER.



The Murders in Serbia—Queen Draga—The New King.

WHEN, last week, the placards of the evening papers announced in the largest of letters the assassination of the King and Queen of Serbia, my first feeling was of sorrow for the murdered King's mother, Queen Natalie, the beautiful, talented lady whose lot has been so much harder than that of most women born to sorrow. She has dropped out of the history of the world now, but at Biarritz, where she has a villa, at Versailles, and in the villages of the Pyrenees she is well known and much loved. The last time I saw her was at Argeles, where "Papa" Peyrafitte rules over one of the most homely and one of the most comfortable hotels in the world, and she was living there as simply as any undistinguished widow would do, coming down to the *table d'hôte* meals, spending her days as a simple woman amongst simple people. When King Milan married her, she was sixteen, the daughter of a Russian Colonel, and one of the most beautiful women in Europe. Time and sorrow have left their marks upon her face, but she is beautiful still. King Milan made their married life at Belgrade as unhappy as the life can be of a sensitive woman tied to a callous *roué*, and when she broke away from him and went to live at Biarritz he would not leave her in peace, but rushed down from Paris and pleaded for two days for forgiveness—and money. Now, King Alexander, concerning whose marital affairs Europe has gossiped as much as it did over those of his father, has been slain by his Army, that Army which he tried so hard to propitiate, and the fifth of the dynasty of Obrenovitch has passed away. They have not, with the exception of their founder, been distinguished either for patriotism or pluck. Milosh, who led the Servians against the Turks in the insurrection in the early years of last century, was a fine fellow and carved his way to the throne as other heroes have done. Michael, who succeeded him, was a nonentity, and was murdered, and then came King Milan.

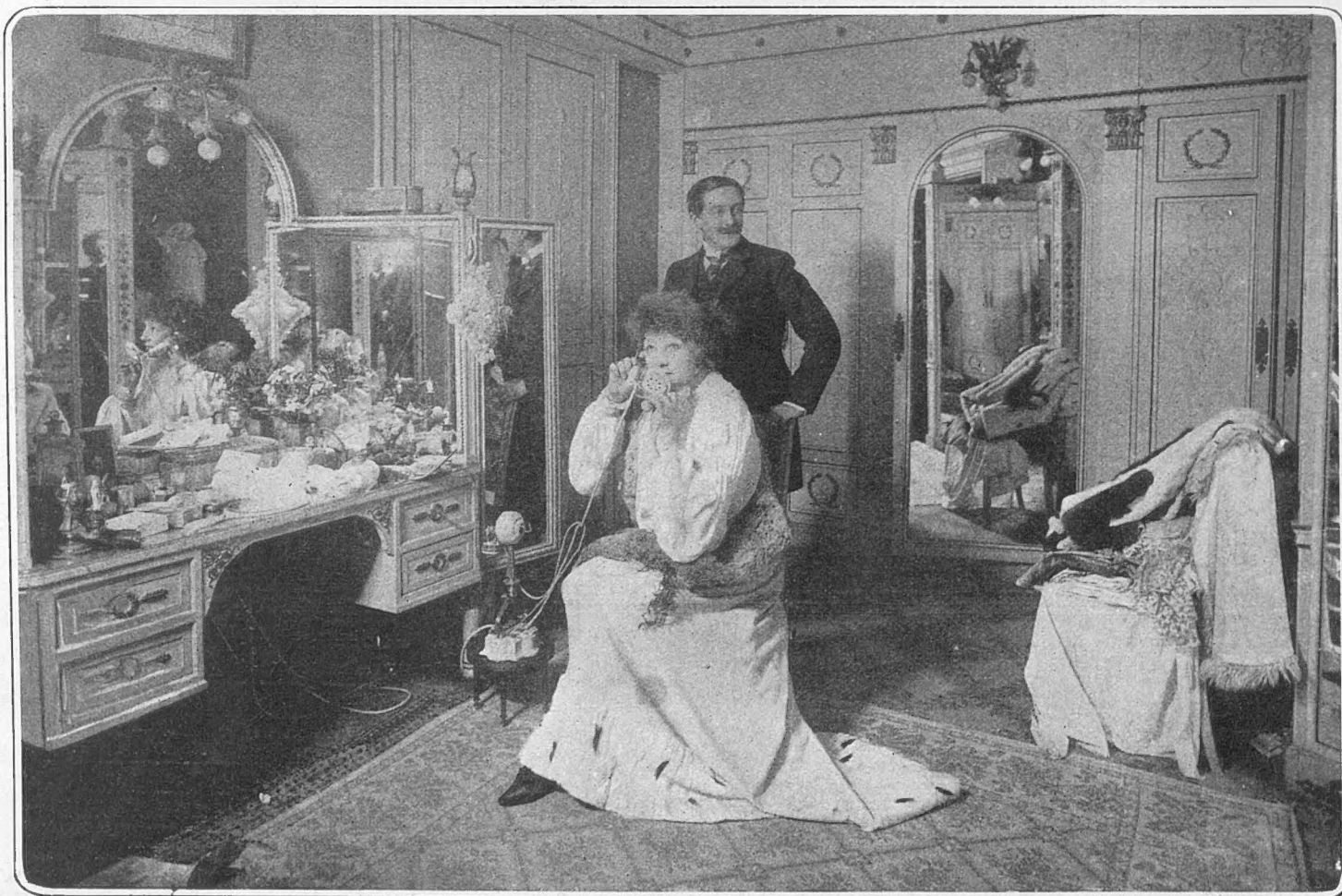
The late King Alexander will be remembered by posterity as the first King to be interviewed in the orthodox manner by a newspaperman. Many Sovereigns have chatted with the great men of the pen, and their opinions and talk have been recorded; but when King Alexander and Queen Draga asked the representative of the *New York Herald* to give to the world their version of the troubles concerning the succession which a year ago were already rocking the throne, they unbosomed themselves with a freedom and an

unconventionality which were quite new in Royal interviews. Queen Draga longed, as did our Queen Mary, to give an heir to the throne, and her hallucinations were those of our own Queen of unblest memory. Her opponents in Serbia, who were many and just as unscrupulous as the politicians of the Near East usually are, declared that if a male child did not make its appearance, through the medium of a warming-pan probably, in the Konak at Belgrade, Queen Draga intended to force one of her brothers upon Serbia as the heir-presumptive to the throne. King Alexander, heckled by his subjects—the heckling taking the form of a loyal address on the subject of the succession—declared that the Queen and himself were still young, that the matter of a successor need not yet be discussed, and very politely told the presenters of the address to mind their own business.

One dynasty founded by a swineherd has passed away and another succeeds. The successful revolutionary leader, Milosh, caused his rival to be killed, and now the adherents of the descendant of that rival have killed the last of the Obrenovitch line. The new King was once pointed out to me at Geneva, and I have the impression of a weak, pleasant-looking man with a grey moustache and a Homburg hat; but Pretenders to thrones are so common in Geneva that one takes little account of them. The present King stands very well with Russia, which his predecessor did not, and has two sons who are pages at the Russian Court; but, unless he is much maligned, he has mixed himself up with that very dangerous body the Macedonian Committee, and may have to discard his old friends very abruptly if he hopes for goodwill from any of the occupants of Eastern thrones. The succession of a Karageorgevitch by no means assures peace to the holder of the throne, for Prince Mirko of Montenegro believes that he should be sitting in the place of the present ruler.

"THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS" SUMMER NUMBER, 1903.

The Editor of *The Illustrated London News* is to be congratulated upon having secured for his Summer Number a long complete story by Rudyard Kipling. Mr. Kipling's tale, entitled "The Captive," is written with all the vigour and brilliancy of his early work, and should certainly be read by every admirer of this great author. It has been splendidly illustrated throughout by Mr. Caton Woodville. The other long story that makes up the Number is by Marriott Watson, who has written a romantic drama that thrills and fascinates from the first line to the last. This story has also been finely illustrated by that charming artist, A. Forestier. The whole Number is printed on beautiful art-paper, which serves to show up the work of the artists in a very striking manner. There is also presented with this Number a beautiful coloured plate, entitled "In the Summer of her Youth." The whole publication, indeed, is well up to the high standard in fiction and art that has always been associated with *The Illustrated London News*.



MADAME SARAH BERNHARDT IN HER BOUDOIR.

Photograph by Branger-Doyé, Paris.

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SMALL TALK *of the* WEEK

THE news that the King and Queen will land in Ireland on July 21 has given very great satisfaction all over the Emerald Isle. There is always something comforting about an official date, though nowadays Royal personages alter their arrangements far more often than was once the case. Their Majesties deserve and will receive a very enthusiastic welcome from the warm-hearted Irish. Again and again the Sovereign, as Prince

of Wales, went out of his way to mark his sympathy with Queen Victoria's Celtic subjects, and his beautiful Consort has done everything in her power to promote, in the wisest manner possible, the Irish industries. The Royal plans will interfere somewhat with the Sussex Fortnight, for their Majesties can scarcely be back in time to be present at Goodwood, the more so that it is said that, while in Ireland, they will pay several country-house visits, including one of some days' duration to Lismore Castle, the Duke of Devonshire's beautiful Irish home.

Royal Ascot. Royal Ascot was never more Royal than this week; indeed, over forty years have gone by since the famous racecourse was attended in full State by the reigning Sovereign. Last year, everything was hoped of the Coronation Ascot, but it will be remembered that the Queen alone was present. The Berkshire meeting is even more important from the social than from the racing point of view, and each year wonderful stories are told concerning the efforts made to gain admittance to the Royal Enclosure. On that bare strip of lawn, the worlds of sport, of fashion, and of high politics have the right to be present, and those who still feel themselves to be only on the borderland of one of these three great sections of Society make frantic efforts to procure the coveted voucher. Curiously enough, the Paddock is more pleasantly situated, as it boasts of a few trees, and many fair denizens of the Enclosure find their way to the Paddock.

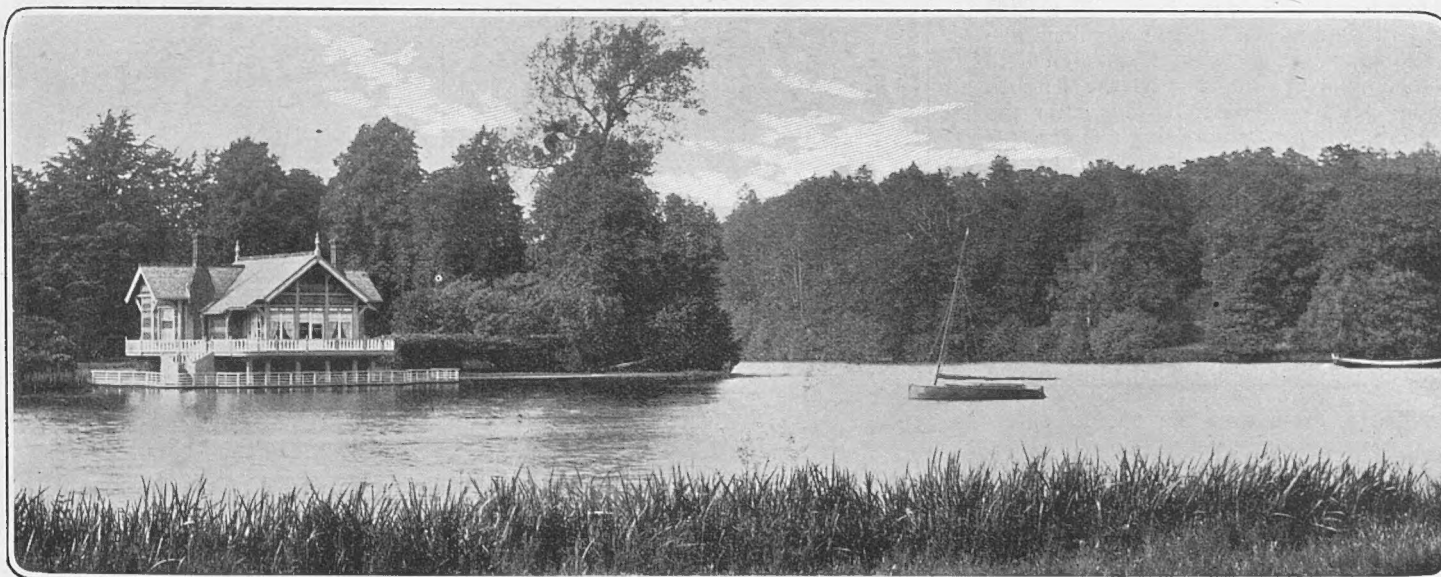
Some Notable Changes. Since Edward VII.'s accession many notable changes have taken place at Ascot. The more interest attaches to these owing to the fact that the King has concerned himself very actively in each and every matter, often driving over to the racecourse from Windsor, and himself supervising all those arrangements connected with the Royal Stand. The new buildings are said to be the most perfect in the world, and in

each of the stands a splendid view can be obtained from every seat. A startling innovation consists of the lifts, these adding immensely to the comfort of those present. The Royal Stand contains a charming suite of apartments, particularly pretty being the decorations of the Queen's drawing-room and of the King's dining-room. There, on each day of this week, their Majesties have presided at a sumptuous lunch, to which both the members of their house-party and the more intimate of their friends have been bidden.

Virginia Water: A Royal Lake. Virginia Water, where their Majesties will probably entertain their Ascot house-party at a picnic this week, is the prettiest spot within easy reach of Windsor. The beautiful, picturesque lake, surrounded by noble forest-trees, has seen many a brilliant Royal gathering, from the days when George III. and his children had a miniature fleet on Virginia Water to those more recent occasions when their present Majesties, as young married people, delighted in picnicking there with their little sons and daughters. Now, a new Royal generation takes pleasure in the Royal lake, the little Princes of Wales having been learning to row there during their stay at Frogmore House.

A Royal House-Party. Not for many a long year—in fact, it may be doubted if ever before, save on the occasion of a great Royal marriage taking place in St. George's Chapel—has there been gathered together a more brilliant and select house-party than that of which the Queen is now hostess at Windsor Castle. A touch of romance is added by the presence of the latest Royal lovers, Prince Andrew of Greece, Queen Alexandra's nephew, and Princess Alice of Battenberg, King Edward's great-niece. Gorgeous preparations are being made for the great ball next Friday, and all the great houses round have been bidden in the most hospitable fashion to bring parties of their guests. Dancing is to take place in the Waterloo Chamber.

Charles I. and M. Loubet. There is something curious in the thought that the first President of the French Republic to visit London will be lodged in regal state under the roof of the beautiful old Palace where Charles I. spent the night before his execution. M. Loubet will arrive on July 6, and will stay only three days in London. It is sincerely to be hoped that the President will be accompanied by the gracious and kindly mistress of the Elysée, for she, during our Sovereign's stay in Paris, entertained the King on more than one occasion. It is not yet decided on which of the three days of the Presidential visit will take place the Royal dinner at the French Embassy. On that occasion the President will do the honours of M. Cambon's London home, and the chief guest will be Edward VII. It is, however, pretty well decided that the great gala-performance at the Opera is to be on Tuesday, July 7, and it is said that the gala will be in every sense as splendid as that which was to have taken place during the June Coronation week a year ago.



THE LAKE AND ROYAL YACHT, VIRGINIA WATER.

Photograph by Russell and Sons, Windsor.

*The President of the
Irish Automobile
Club.*

Mr. Goff, who is the President of the Irish Automobile Club, may well account himself at the present moment one of the most important of living Irishmen. He is, of course, a very great authority on the horseless carriage, and also on Irish roads. The sons, and for the matter of that, the daughters too, of the Emerald

Isle have always been extremely keen where any kind of outdoor sport was concerned. There seems poetic justice in the thought that Ireland is just now enjoying quite an unwonted measure of prosperity, thanks to the popularity not only of the horseless carriage, but to motor-racing. In spite of the croakers, there seems no reason to fear that the great coming race will be attended by any of the fatalities which marked the Paris-Madrid contest, and Mr. Goff and his friends are to be heartily congratulated on the immense trouble to which they have gone to make the great day a success.



MR. W. G. D. GOFF, PRESIDENT OF THE
IRISH AUTOMOBILE CLUB.

Photograph by Foote, Waterford.

circles in Rome the game of polo (writes my Rome Correspondent). I saw them practising a couple of weeks ago at the Borghese Villa, and was more struck by the cleverness of the ponies than by the skill of the riders. A match has just been played at the Capannelle amidst a very fashionable throng of onlookers. The Princess di San Faustino, Princess Rospigliosi, Baroness Blanc, the United States Ambassador and his wife, and many others, were to be seen at the interesting gathering. Almost as amusing as the actual exhibition of play was the difficulty experienced by the novices to the game in grappling with the technical terms. However hard one tries to repress a smile when mistakes are being made by foreigners in talking English, the task becomes well-nigh superhuman when one constantly hears a goal-post termed a "goat-post."

*Discovery in the
Vatican.*

A most interesting discovery has been made in the Library of the Vatican; a manuscript has been found, written by an Italian, describing the attack of the famous Spanish Armada upon the British Fleet in 1588. The writer, to judge from his description of all the events, was undoubtedly on one of the chief Spanish battleships; his excuses for the constant defeat of the Spanish Fleet form most diverting reading. The wind was always in favour of the British and against the Spaniards; the French invariably treated the Spaniards in a most shameful manner when they, the magnanimous Spaniards, deigned to enter French ports; and, finally, the English actually stooped to espionage! This latter the writer describes in a most amusing manner. It seems that some Englishmen disguised as French provision-dealers boarded the Spanish galleons, and thus obtained a full view of all the Spanish Fleet. Having done this, they "returned to land, and, turning round, mocked at the Spaniards!"

*Lady
Feodorowna
Bertie.*

I regret that Lady Feodorowna Bertie, wife of Sir Francis Bertie, the new British Ambassador in Rome, has for some days been extremely ill. At one time the doctors entertained serious fears regarding her condition. Now, Lady Feodorowna is considerably better.

*A Minister's
Adroitness.*

Prince Ferdinand of Bulgaria entertains a number of prejudices of a superstitious character (writes the Berlin Correspondent of *The Sketch*). He has an especial aversion against Fridays and the number thirteen. This peculiarity of the Prince is well known to his Ministers. But on

the occasion of the recent opening of the harbour of Bourgas, the Minister of Public Works found himself confronted by the necessity of referring in his speech to the consecration of the railway from Jamboli to Bourgas on May 18 (old style), 1890—exactly thirteen years ago. He was seized with a brilliant idea, and spoke as follows: "Twelve years and twelve months ago, your Royal Highness condescended to dig the first sod," &c.

Hay-fever.

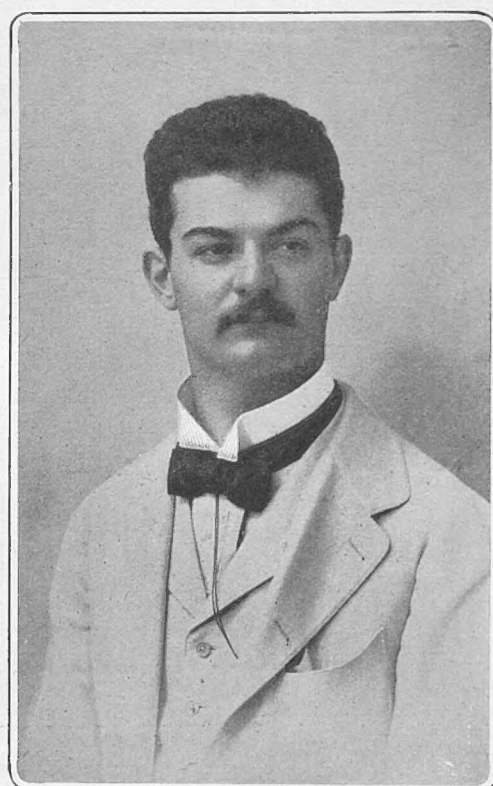
Hay-fever is now in the meridian of its rule. Despite the advances of science, no remedy has yet been found for the insidious disease, which German doctors tell me attacks increasing numbers every year. The only cure is a sea-voyage, or Heligoland. Every summer, in June there assembles on that tiny island a small community of people, some two hundred in number, who are victims of the disease. They have formed themselves into a "Hay-fever League," and have drawn up an elaborate set of rules which are displayed prominently in all parts of the island. The main object of the League is to collect funds to enable the poor patients to spend six weeks at the seaside every year. But it appears that even in Heligoland the patients are not absolutely secure. When the wind blows from the east, it carries with it from the Continent irritating seed-atoms.

A Singer's Death.

A curious story of the dramatic instinct prevailing even over the pains of death reaches me from Vienna. The heroine of it was the well-known singer, Frau Irma Golz, who died last week at the age of twenty-nine. She suffered from decomposition of the blood, and was subjected to the new light-treatment. A few days before the end, the doctor announced to her that she was about to enter the "ultra-violet rays." "Rather say," she rejoined, "the blueness of heaven." Subsequently the artiste begged to be removed from her bed and placed in a chair. There she bade farewell to her relatives. After informing her husband that she restored to him his liberty and administering advice to the other members of her family, she begged that she might be clothed in the festive raiment of "Traviata." This wish was fulfilled. At her urgent request, the room was brilliantly lighted and her brother took his seat at the piano to play Mendelssohn's "Frühlingslied." As the opening chords were vibrating through the room, the artiste rose to her feet, and, with an expression that baffles description, sang the melody. Suddenly she broke off, and with a heart-rending cry of "To earth, to earth!" fell lifeless to the ground.

*The Servian
Tragedy.*

Although Servia has long been in a state of tumult and unrest, it is not too much to say that the awful news of the assassination of King Alexander and Queen Draga caused intense surprise and horror throughout the civilised world. King Alexander, who was born in 1876, ascended the throne on the abdication of his father, King Milan, in 1889. His marriage to Madame Draga Maschin, in August 1900, was exceedingly unpopular and was opposed by His Majesty's advisers. The Servians feared that, in the absence of a direct heir, the much-hated Queen Draga's brother would succeed to the Throne, and this, together with the King's high-handed action in wiping out laws and dismissing officials obnoxious to him, no doubt accounted for the unhappy ending. The Queen's brothers, several of her relatives, and certain loyal Ministers and Aides-de-Camp were also murdered, and Prince Peter Karageorgevitch was declared King by the Army. The results of the tragedy remain to be seen.



THE LATE KING AND QUEEN OF SERVIA.

A Future Empress.

The Archduchess Otto of Austria, although her personality is very little known to the British people, will probably live to see herself Empress of Austria. In any case, even if her husband does not become Emperor—for he has an elder brother, the Archduke Franz Ferdinand—the fact that the latter was married morganatically to the Countess Sophie Chotek will place the pretty Austrian Archduchess of whom we publish a portrait in the peculiar position of being the first lady in the Dual Kingdom. Of course, the venerable Emperor's daughters now rank before the other Archduchesses; but this will not always be the case, and even at the present time the Archduchess Otto is regarded by the high Austrian nobility as their social leader.

Lady Ludlow's Concert.

That magnificent mansion in Berkeley Square, Seaford House, is to be the scene of many gaieties during the present Season. The ball on June 25 promises to be a brilliant affair, while the concert that Lady Ludlow is arranging to take place, by permission of Lord Howard de Walden, on June 23 gives every indication of being successful financially and representative socially. The great ball-room is to be used as the concert-room, where a stage will be erected at the far end of the lofty apartment, with its yellow-brocade panelled walls and its beautiful decorations of the Louis Seize period. Among the artists who have promised to assist on this occasion are Mdle. Tiziano, from the Italian Opera, Miss Louise Dale, Miss Alice Hollander, Herr and Madame von Dulong, Mr. Bertram Binyon, Mr. Chatham, Mr. Hamilton Earle, of the Royal Italian Opera, Mr. Mercer Adam, and M. Zacharewitsch.

The Charity for which Lady Ludlow is working with such admirable zeal is that of St. Cyprian's Beth-Esda, a Home for Young Girls, that gives help and guidance to some of the saddest and most tragic victims of London's lower life. Seaford House is an ideal place for an entertainment to attract both the interest and enjoyment of the public. The great hall that was finished and thrown open for the first time during the Coronation festivities is one of the notable sights among London's aristocratic mansions. It is entirely composed of Mexican onyx of a translucent and wonderful shade of green, and it has lofty pillars of green Irish marble. There is a superb screen at the entrance of the hall, composed of wrought-iron, gilded, while the supports of the onyx balustrades and other decorations are likewise of this beautiful gilded metal-work. The great banqueting-room, which is to be used for tea on the occasion of the concert, is a lofty apartment panelled and wainscotted in dark Spanish walnut. The curtains which drape the long windows are particularly interesting, the design in dull gold with which they are embroidered being an exact copy of the heraldic design with which Lady Ludlow's (then Lady Howard de Walden) Coronation robe was embroidered. The pattern is carried out with the oak-leaf and acorn which is the distinguishing feature of the de Walden Coat-of-Arms. The decorations which will be used at the concert, and which will be carried out by Messrs. Smee and Cobay, of New Bond Street, will be exactly the same as those to be used at the ball on the evening of the 25th. Lady Ludlow has secured an admirable list of Patronesses who have taken an interest in the St. Cyprian's Beth-Esda. The Duchess of Portland, the Duchess of Sutherland, the Duchess of Somerset, the Duchess of Bedford, the Countess of Bective, Lady Farquhar, Mrs. Walter Palmer, and many others are interesting themselves in the concert, for which tickets can be obtained by letter addressed to "Private Secretary, Seaford House, Belgrave Square, S.W."

The King of Italy in Paris.

King Victor Emmanuel will pay his promised visit to President Loubet from the 16th to the 20th of July. He will not stay at the Italian Embassy, but will be the guest of the Republic at the Hôtel du Quai d'Orsay, the French Foreign Office, the whole of the first-floor being set apart for the King's use. It was King Victor's great desire to see the Annual Review at Longchamp on the occasion of the National Fête on July 14, but, as he was unable to be in Paris on that date, the French Government has done an unprecedented thing and has put off the Grand Review for a day or two, to suit the King's convenience.



ARCHDUCHESS OTTO, FUTURE EMPRESS OF AUSTRIA.

The Last of Queen Victoria's Bridesmaids.

Lady Jane Harriet Ellice, who died last week at the age of eighty-four, was the last survivor of the late Queen Victoria's bridesmaids. She was born in the same year as the Queen, and in 1847 married the late Mr. William Ellice, who died in 1892. Lady Harriet was the daughter of the third Earl of Radnor and great-aunt of the present Peer.

A Remarkable Decoration.

The Cross of St. Andrew, which the Czar has just presented to General Prince Louis Napoleon, has a very remarkable peculiarity attaching to it. All those who are decorated with this Order have the right once in their lives to demand a pardon for a Russian subject who has been condemned to death. The ungracious part of this privilege is that it by no means follows that the condemned man will be reprieved; but, at any rate, the poor wretch has a chance, for his case is thus brought directly to the notice of the Czar, without the intervention of any officials, and, unless there is something political about his crime, the probability is that he will escape with his life.

There is a story going about on the other side of the Atlantic that the negroes of Alabama and Kentucky are secretly organising an expedition for the conquest of Haiti. They are getting together an army, and intend to charter some vessels in order to capture Port-au-Prince by surprise, the object of the scheme being to find a country where they will be free from the race-hatred which pursues them in America. The idea of the leaders is to capture the negro State, place it under the protection of the United States, and make of it a thoroughly orderly community in which men of their race can work out their own destiny in peace. But whether Uncle Sam can keep his blind eye turned to this project long enough for its successful accomplishment is a very doubtful matter.



LADY LUDLOW,
WHO IS ORGANISING A GREAT CONCERT, TO TAKE PLACE AT SEAFORD HOUSE
ON JUNE 23, IN AID OF ST. CYPRIAN'S BETH-ESDA.

Photograph by Lafayette, Bond Street, W.

"L'Aiglon" in Italy.

It is not likely that Madame Sarah Bernhardt will appear in M. Rostand's play, "L'Aiglon," in London this year, not because the Lord Chamberlain will forbid it, but because it did not prove very attractive here. But it has been otherwise in Rome, for there it was a great deal too attractive, some of the lines in the piece creating such excitement that the play had to be forbidden. Austria is in bad odour in Italy just now because the Government is naturally unwilling to subsidise an Italian University in or near Trieste. In "L'Aiglon" there are several passages addressed to Metternich which are of an abusive character, and these were taken up by the Roman playgoers in the cheaper seats and cheered furiously, some of the audience actually singing the old Garibaldian hymn, "Va fuori d'Italia, va fuori stranier." As Austria is now the ally of Italy, it was impossible for the authorities to permit such open insults, and so the performance of the play was forbidden, curiously enough, just at the time when the author, M. Rostand, was being received as an Academician in Paris.

The Passion of Parliament.

Lively times have come again to the House of Commons. There was more than one half-hour of glorious life last week, when Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, in his most icy manner, attacked his former colleagues, and when Mr. Ritchie repudiated the new fiscal doctrines of Mr. Chamberlain. Feeling ran very high on the Unionist side. Free Trade Ministers were passionately interrupted by Protectionist members, and there was as obvious a split as occurred in 1886, when Mr. Gladstone produced the famous Home Rule Bill. A Cabinet or a Party divided against itself cannot stand long.

"Black Michael."

Very grim was the appearance of Sir Michael Hicks-Beach as he stood at the end of the third Ministerial bench. He has taken the corner-place usually occupied by Sir William Hart Dyke and Sir James Fergusson, increasing the group of retired veterans who have been described as "monumental members." But Sir Michael has by no means withdrawn from active Parliamentary life, nor has his influence been lessened by resignation of a great official post. While the tall figure looked thinner than ever last week, his face was sternly resolute and he never spoke with greater force. One of his personal allusions to Mr. Chamberlain gave special pleasure to the Liberals. Alluding to the Colonial Secretary's speech at Birmingham, Sir Michael remarked that "he did not speak as Prime Minister."

Mr. Ritchie has increased his Parliamentary reputation by standing up to Mr. Chamberlain. It was predicted when he succeeded Sir Michael that he would prove a complaisant keeper of the purse. If Mr. Balfour and Mr. Chamberlain shared that expectation, they mis-read his character. Mr. Ritchie has proved that he possesses the dogged tenacity of his race. He has entered on a contest with the most powerful man in the United Kingdom; but the manner in which he raised the Free Trade flag in the House last week showed a character worthy of his broad, square shoulders.

It is evident that the Colonial Secretary intends to fight for his own policy. Opposition has increased his pugnacity. Those who imagined that he was too weary or too old to enter on another campaign have found they were mistaken. Within or without the Cabinet he will advocate and argue and agitate. There is no other statesman with equal ingenuity and resource. His adversaries may therefore beware of him. During the attacks upon him last week, Mr. Chamberlain sat unmoved, with closed eyes, but all members knew that his brain was busier than any other man's in the House.

Otter-Hunting.

The otter, though not so popular as the "little red varmint," deserves the goodwill of all sportsmen, for he comes to their rescue at a time of year when the leaves show that the close season for the fox has arrived. Like cub-hunting, chasing the otter rouses the sportsman from his bed in the early morning, for the Master who wants to show his followers good sport is always at work before the rest of the world are having their breakfasts. At one time, otter-hunting was looked upon as a North Country pursuit, but Devon has always been famous for its packs, and of late years the pleasant streams of Hampshire and Wiltshire have shown

excellent sport, though they are not so regularly hunted as the North and West. Nothing is more delightful on a fine morning than to meet in a broad meadow and to follow the hounds along the banks of the stream until at last Master Otter is discovered and the chase begins merrily up and down and across the water. Thick boots, with plenty of holes in them to let the water out, and good navy-serge knickerbockers are necessary for those who want to see the fun and are not afraid of standing in mid stream to stop the quarry as he shoots through the water. It is one of the very few things for which it is worth while getting up early.

Big Game in Central Africa.

Sportsmen who sigh for fresh worlds to conquer and deplore the pace at which civilisation moves will be interested in a letter I have just received from a correspondent who is a Commissioner in the service of the Chartered Company. His station is in Central Africa, too far south

for the men who go to shoot big game in Uganda, and too far north for men from Rhodesia and Beira. His work entails constant travelling over a square whose sides are nearly one hundred and fifty miles long, and within that area he meets lions, leopards, elephants, the rhinoceros, hippopotamus, eland, sable antelope, zebra, hartebeeste, water-buck, buffalo, and wild boar. Does not this little list, which is by no means inclusive, send a thrill of delight through the sportsman's heart? My correspondent does not share the average sporting writer's enthusiasm for lions, finding them sly, treacherous beasts, and he tells me that the buffalo and wildebeeste will turn and charge again and again, while the rhinoceros attacks as soon as he winds or sees the stranger. It is exceedingly likely that the Commissioner's district is one of the best game-preserves left in the world to-day, and he has it, to all intents and purposes, to himself. He has just shot a bull eland weighing about fifteen hundred pounds uncleaned, with horns $32\frac{1}{2}$ inches from base to tip.



MISS GRACE PALOTTA, WHO RECENTLY RETURNED HOME AFTER A LENGTHY VISIT TO AUSTRALIA.

Photograph by Lafayette, Bond Street, W.

The *Morning Post* has uttered a timely protest against a very bad habit of shopkeepers. If you go into a shop and ask for some well-known

brand of food, medicine, or household utensil, you are very often told that the shopkeeper is out of the article, but that he has "something just as good." In two cases out of three, a busy man or woman does not pause to discuss the matter, but accepts the imitation quite cheerfully. In this way the maker of the genuine article suffers, and something that may be worthless and is certainly inferior does duty for what the customer set out to seek. A week ago, I tested the truth of statements that the habit is very widespread. I went into a large chemist's-shop, stayed there seven minutes having a prescription made up, and saw three customers served with "something just as good." None of them protested, perhaps because in all three cases the substitute was cheaper than what the customer asked for in the first instance. The shop is large, well appointed, and situated in a busy thoroughfare, and, if these tricks are openly resorted to in a prosperous place, what chance has the customer who goes to a poorer neighbourhood where the temptation that the maker of substitutes can offer to the shopkeeper must be so much greater? This matter cannot be too widely known and discussed; it may be that some remedy can be found for it.

ROUND THE THEATRES: SOME PROMISING YOUNG PLAYERS.



MISS DOROTHY DRAKE, WHO HAS BEEN PLAYING IN "HER SECOND TIME ON EARTH," AT THE ADELPHI.

Photograph by W. and D. Downey, Ebury Street, S.W.



MISS ALICE COLEMAN AS MABEL KINGSTON.



MISS EVELYN BOND AS EVELYN SOMERS.

TWO PRETTY "SCHOOL-GIRLS" AT THE PRINCE OF WALES'S.

Photographs by the Biograph Studio, Regent Street, W.

SMALL TALK ON THE BOULEVARDS.

The President's Visit.

The subject that the Parisian has at heart is the visit of President Loubet to London (writes the Paris Correspondent of *The Sketch*). The way that history has been made in France during the last two months is baffling. All that savage snarling at England is stamped out. Even the *Patrie*

sees that the game is played out and that Jacques and John are determined to be friends in spite of its squeaks. The fact that St. James's Palace has been placed at the President's disposal is universally regarded as a great tribute to the French nation. There will be a very big influx of French visitors of the wealthier classes, and already there is intriguing for seats at the gala at Covent Garden.

The President will secure a very warm corner in English hearts. Without hesitation, I say that M. Loubet has the most sympathetic face I have ever seen with a public man. He literally breathes of good-humour and good-nature, and his face does not belie him. But he is a man of resolution and nerve. When, in those terrible times of five years ago, the Comte Christiani rushed at him in the Presidential tribune at Auteuil races and smashed in his hat, the myriads of his enemies were certain

of sweeping the pool for the Grand Prix with Quo Vadis, Caius, and Vinicius first, second, and third, and picked up 303,000 francs, is the luckiest owner on the French Turf. He sticks at no money when he has made up his mind to secure a crack, and his judgment is marvellous. His commission agents are the puzzle of the smart brigade. They can never get the slightest trace of them, when bookmakers would pay down gold to know what Edmond Blanc fancies. As Deputy, he brought despair and desolation on a vast number of enterprising individuals living in the Charing Cross Road and the Fulham and King's Roads, who promised fortunes while you wait on the racecourse. Thanks to him, no tipsters' advertisements are allowed, and that has led to the disappearance of at least thirty blackmailing newspapers. Winning or losing, he never shows the slightest emotion.

Edmond Blanc.

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Edmond Rostand.

He was very nervous, was Rostand, at his reception by the Academy. He nervously scanned the amphitheatre, filled with a flower-bed of female toilettes, and seemed to take courage when he saw his wife and children. The whole thing was very strange. There was this young man of thirty-four the hero of such a demonstration that the Academy could not recall a precedent. Older members had struggled for fifty years before they had secured the honours of Immortality. But there was not a suspicion of jealousy; there was an infectious good-humour. Rostand's address was light and bright and genial. He threw in fairy-tales, and defined the meaning of the word "panache," that he is so fond of using, as though he was already engaged upon the famous Dictionary with his brother Immortals. It was a charming and fashionable success. Rostand is now seeking injunctions to prevent theatres mounting little plays of days beyond recall that he signed.

Queen Natalie.

The young King of Serbia, who has met with so sad a fate, had twice visited Paris, on each occasion during the Presidency of M. Félix Faure, who entertained him at the Elysée. I hear that his mother, Queen Natalie, who has been staying at Versailles with her sister, Princess Ghika, was quite prostrated when she received the terrible news. Queen Natalie is very popular with the Parisians. She has a residence in the Rue Royale, but spends the greater part of the year at Biarritz, in her fine mansion, the Villa Sacchino, overlooking the ocean. The ex-Queen is a recent convert to the Church of Rome.



M. E. BLANC, OWNER OF THE FIRST THREE HORSES IN THE GRAND PRIX DE PARIS.

of his resignation. He sternly replied, "I did not come here for my pleasure, and I will not go away for the pleasure of anyone." That was the turning-point, and his popularity to-day ranks with that of Carnot.

The Automobile Question.

Now that the horror of the Paris-Madrid race has evaporated, the future of the great French industry is being seriously considered. A month ago the auto was the King of France; to-day it is down in the dust. In every café-concert ribald songs are hurled against it, and they are sung at every street-corner. For the moment business is paralysed. Manufacturers find themselves with machines of tremendous development which are worth only so much old metal, and half the machinery is useless. It will be a long time before matters right themselves. The suppression of all sorts and conditions of races leaves the unfortunate motor out of the pale of "fashionable intelligence," where aforesaid it held principal rank. I have reason to believe that the scramble between French and English manufacturers will begin. The English are ahead in automobiling for commercial purposes, and the French, now that their flying death-traps are doomed, will devote themselves to the practical.

"The Admirable Crichton."

The Parisians regarded Mr. Frohman's great dash from the Duke of York's to the Renaissance and back again while you wait, with "The Admirable Crichton," as a theatrical sporting event. It is too late in the day to once more go over the scenery sawn in three parts and pieced together and then unpieced for its London voyage. To the play. It was a great success, an out-and-out success for Mr. Frohman. Messrs. Boucicault and Hamilton, when they saw money being turned away, must have regretted that they were so exacting on that "for one night only." Many see in this the possibility of the foundation of a permanent English Theatre in Paris. This is sheer nonsense. All the aristocratic English and American Colony were present, with Sir Edmund Monson, the British Ambassador, at the head. Mr. Henry Kemble was very cordially received, and the French in the house compared him to Taillhade and Courtès. Mr. Irving made an



MISS LILIAN ELDEE, NOW PLAYING FRANCESCA DA RIMINI IN "DANTE," AT DRURY LANE.

Photograph by the Biograph Studio, Regent Street, W.

AMERICAN COMPETITORS IN THE GORDON BENNETT RACE.



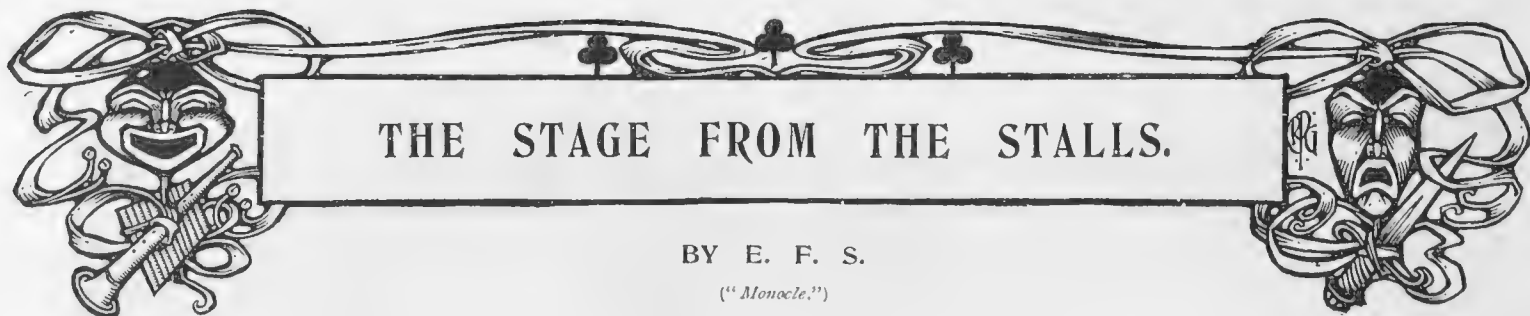
MR. PERCY OWEN ON THE WINTON RACING-CAR WHICH HE WILL DRIVE IN THE RACE.



MR. WINTON.

MR. ALEXANDER WINTON AND HIS WINTON RACING-CAR, ALSO SPECIALLY BUILT FOR THE GORDON BENNETT RACE.

Photographs by Lafayette, Dublin.



THE STAGE FROM THE STALLS.

BY E. F. S.

("Monocle.")

"FLODDEN FIELD," "THE MAN THAT WAS," THE STAGE SOCIETY, AND THE FRENCH PLAYERS.

THE Monday after Whitsuntide was very busy. In the afternoon the Stage Society closed its season with three pieces. In the evening Mr. Tree presented "Flodden Field" and "The Man that Was," whilst Madame Jane Hading appeared in "Sapho," and Madame Granier began her campaign with "Les Deux Écoles." Since then there has been a pause. "Flodden Field," presumably, is entitled to first consideration, and the piece proved to be as great a disaster to the Poet Laureate as the battle to the Scots, and the disaster was well deserved, for James IV. showed himself no more and no less incompetent as a general than Mr. Alfred Austin as a dramatist. The question why the author of the piece was appointed Poet Laureate is out of my sphere, but I am entitled to ask why Mr. Beerbohm Tree produced this pretentious piece of rubbish from his pen. Probably there will be no answer. For how could the actor-manager reply? He is sufficiently intelligent to be aware that "Flodden Field" was not entitled to a hearing, and, consequently, that we know some motive other than interest in drama caused him to produce it for the one night of ignominy. It began with a little, ineffective Prologue and a Pepper's Ghost; then an Act with some disconnected duets and a scene between the wicked Lady Heron and her illicit lover, Surrey, tranquil enough in his lawless passion to preach morals to her, filled the first half. The second became quaintly melodramatic. Lady Heron is all for the English and Surrey, her wicked sweetheart. So she lures the feeble Scots King, who was wooing her with the worst motives, to her Castle, in order that he may waste his time in fruitless dalliance and arrive at the stricken field "after the battle is over." The King's conduct is too wildly comic even for melodrama. He has shocking hopes concerning Lady Heron, and to win her favour presents her with a rope of pearls, which may have been judicious, and also with the freedom of her husband, till then his prisoner. Was there ever a wilder stroke of humour? The husband, when he finds the King playing kiss without a ring with his wife, shows some signs of annoyance and goes to arm himself and fight against the Scots. Why, I ask vainly, did not he and Lady Heron bang the licentious monarch on the head with the warming-pan and tie him up and stuff him into the mediæval equivalent for the coal-cellar, instead of permitting him to embark in the fearful battle which lasted ten minutes or so and apparently took place in the back-garden of the Castle? Surrey appeared, straight from the fight, to explain what a terrible affair it was and how he had killed the Scots King; but, after looking at him, one came to the conclusion that he was a kind of Falstaff and had spent his time in the refreshment-tent, for there were less signs of strife about him and his costume than are exhibited by a lady after her presentation at Court.

However, there is little need to speak warmly about the play, as some critics have done. Indeed, I wonder what they expected if they were disappointed. Yet some, no doubt, were sanguine—sanguine like the five-pound pike choked to death in its efforts to swallow a four-pound bream. Still, one cannot help blaming Mr. Beerbohm Tree. We know that begging from stage-door to stage-door there are plenty of manuscripts of unconventional plays not likely to enjoy commercial success, yet possessed of real quality. Why could he not have chosen one of these for his ephemeral programme instead of this scrap of officialism, which he surely would never have touched in ignorance of its author's name and position? It makes one feel very bitter about the actor-manager system, because it causes doubts as to the real interest, even of Mr. Tree, in drama. Money was spent on the piece, but the performance showed little enthusiasm on the part of the players. Miss Miriam Clements acted prettily, and Mr. Herbert Ainley in an agreeable, manly fashion; but Mr. Oscar Asche was dull and stolid, Miss Constance Collier restless and violent, and Mr. Fred Terry seemed to have no chance of showing his quality.

Mr. Kinsey Peile had a difficult task in adapting Kipling's story, and "The Man that Was" showed signs of effort. Indeed, one felt that the author was struggling to delay the introduction of the long-lost British officer after whose appearance the piece must be hurried to a conclusion. Comparatively little is gained by the addition to the play of the ladies who do not appear in the tale. Nevertheless, whether such appeals to tears by means of a subject bound to command them are legitimate or not, one feels that the little work has a grip, a real grip. Mr. Tree, no doubt, looked like a wild man of the woods, and, at first, caused some uneasy laughter; but, after a while, the tragedy of the efforts of the bestialised man to recover his manhood and identity by means of his memory became painfully interesting, vivid, and thrilling. The actor had a firm hold of the part, and the piece—mainly, I think, by dint of his audacious

acting—grew very strong and exceedingly pathetic. Yet I believe there are worthier short plays in the market unlikely to find publicity.

We saw a worthier play during the afternoon in Mr. Fox's work, "In the Waters of Bitterness," presented by the Stage Society, which treated very finely a quiet little tragedy of a plain woman and an irritable, consumptive lad whom she loved. Here was shown a real touch of life, a dexterous compound of the comically pathetic and pathetically comic, and a fine, strong study of character which enabled Miss Madge McIntosh once more to give a brilliant performance.

In a sense, perhaps the most important element in the last production of the brilliant season of the Stage Society was Mr. Shaw's piece, "The Admirable Bashville," a clever but regrettably uneven *jeu d'esprit* which had very much the flavour of an impromptu. It was a kind of burlesque of nothing in particular, a sort of burlesque "in the air," and decidedly nebulous. Of course, a great deal was very amusing, but, unfortunately, no little resembled the irresponsible tomfoolery of some writers possessing far less than the gifts of Mr. Bernard Shaw, and no discretion at all. The performances of the Stage Society, in a way, are too much like ordinary stage productions to support the kind of "happy thought" entertainment which may be quite delightful on less formal occasions; and when a comic piece is presented at the Imperial Theatre to a large audience, it is not likely to achieve great success if it seems to have been worked out on the spur of the moment. However, we all laughed heartily at the mechanical burlesquing of the Elizabethan Societies' system of stage presentations, even when we noticed that it was adopted as much for convenience as for humour; but when the social reformer peeped out in the speeches of the pugilistic hero humour took wings. Perhaps the fact that the strenuous efforts of some clever people yielded comparatively little laughter was the best evidence that the ninety minutes' joke had some flat places. Miss Henrietta Watson is a remarkably clever actress of great versatility, but after the first scene her efforts to be amusing were ill rewarded, and this could hardly be helped, since the humours of her part were monotonous. Mr. Aubrey Smith, excellently made up to resemble the author of the piece, had little to do. Constant repetition rendered Mr. Wyes a little tedious, and caused Mr. Ben Webster, despite his energy and skill, to become something of a bore. Miss Fanny Brough made, perhaps, the "hit" of the piece, and this partly because she had only one scene, comparatively short. The piece, at least, shows that, by taking more trouble, "G. B. S." could write a satirical play of very great force.

The French invasion is very severe—in fact, it looks as though we should soon have notices hung out at some of the theatres saying "English spoken here"; yet, alas, so deplorable is the speech of many of our players that the critical would doubt the truth of the notice. Madame Jeanne Granier has come back with "Les Deux Écoles," a brilliant, very naughty light comedy which ought to have caused those critics who howl about problem-plays to break blood-vessels with indignation. Possibly they do not quite understand its naughtiness—I almost hope so. Last year she brought over a remarkably strong Company—so strong, indeed, that hers was one of the least noteworthy performances. This year she is quite the "star" of the cast. Madame Hading, in producing "Sapho," is beginning the curious competition of Saphos that we are to see, for Réjane and Bernhardt are both to appear in the part, a fact which I sincerely deplore. No doubt, the French version is far better than the poor stuff manufactured by Mr. Clyde Fitch, but even then art is no gainer by these coarsely drawn pictures of fallen women, and they are far too distinct from our normal life to render any other service. Daudet may have been sincere in saying that he wrote the book with a moral aim, but he certainly missed the mark, and in the result we have a play which, like the virtuoso works affected by some pianists, has no intrinsic value and merely serves to glorify the performers. It will, of course, be interesting to see Madame Hading as Paula and Bernhardt in the part of Iris, and I should be very sorry to miss Réjane's performance in "A Doll's House," for these three plays, whilst giving parts rich enough for any "star" actress, were not written for the "star" actress, but as real dramas in which the subject happens to demand that the leading lady should have the chief and, in fact, the almost overwhelming part. No doubt, the foreign Companies have a difficulty, since, by playing well-known pieces, they appeal to a large number of people with a scanty knowledge of French, and, perhaps, the complaint of the critic has an element of selfishness in it, though not when he grumbles at the sickly sentimentalities of "La Dame aux Camélias" or the brutal impropriety of "Sapho," a part in which Réjane really reigns supreme.



MISS EDNA MAY

IN THE SECOND ACT OF "THE SCHOOL GIRL," AT THE PRINCE OF WALES'S

Photograph by W. and D. Downey, Ebury Street, S.W.

THE PROBLEM OF FLIGHT: INSIDE AN AIR-SHIP FACTORY.

TO any trustworthy and comprehensive account of *aéronautics* the name of Spencer must necessarily be attached, and it is to the Messrs. Spencer's air-ship manufactory, at Highbury, that I would mentally conduct you. Imagine, then, a long, lofty, dome-roofed building, well lighted by means of many windows in the side-walls, and having a shallow gallery at either end, flanked with a fancy



LAYING GOLDBEATER'S-SKIN ON MODEL FOR SMALL BALLOON.

balustrade. As you enter, your olfactory nerves are quickened by a pungent aroma of gas, and your attention claimed for an air-ship in the making. There is a trinity of Spencers present, brothers Percival, Stanley, and Arthur. I do not wish any comparisons of importance to be deduced from the sequence of their names, although the first is usually regarded as the head of the enterprising trio. So please concede him that place. He is, moreover, our guide upon this occasion, the other two coming under our notice as occasional philosophers, and all three being always our friends.

The air-ship in question, the light bamboo framework of which is well advanced in construction, is destined to create records in *aërial* navigation in the near future. You will hear more, much more, about it. Perchance you will see it sailing gracefully over London. It will be fitted with a motor of six times the power of the one which carried Stanley Spencer over London last summer, namely, twenty-four horse-power. This will be a tractor, and not a propeller, thus being situated in front instead of at the rear. Trial-trips will be made from the Crystal Palace, and the War Office have expressed a desire to have some of their experts present upon these occasions. The estimated speed of the vessel will be twenty-five miles an hour.

There are three kinds of material used in making the "envelope" of a balloon, namely, goldbeater's-skin, silk, and alpaca. The first is generally utilised for war-balloons. The skin, in its crude form, after having been well soaked in water, is laid over a large, inflated model. It is a long and tedious task, constant trimming with scissors being necessary. When the model is entirely covered, the air is released from it, and the skin envelope is complete. Both the silk and alpaca are specially prepared, the latter being so closely woven that it is well-nigh untearable and non-porous. Silk is used for large balloons and alpaca for smaller sizes.

The smallest navigable balloon is one of a capacity of twelve thousand cubic feet, and the largest that the Messrs. Spencer have made was of a capacity of a hundred and fifty thousand cubic feet; it would accommodate twenty-five passengers and took about six months to construct. The silk and alpaca are cut into pointed strips, sewn together by machinery, and coated with a special varnish, which will not crack when dry, but retain its elasticity. The net is usually made by sailors, whose hands are deft in that kind of work; it consists of the finest Italian hemp, thins off as it reaches the top of the balloon, the meshes also correspondingly varying in dimensions.

The balloons mostly in use are those with a capacity varying from fifty thousand to one hundred thousand cubic feet; in the manufacture of these, perhaps five hundred to one thousand yards of silk or alpaca would be used, in addition to miles of rope and cord, which would contain thousands of knots, all tied by hand. Six bags of ballast, each weighing fifty-six pounds, are usually taken up with a balloon, and during the process of inflation as many as two hundred and fifty bags might be in use.

There are other smaller balloons made for advertising purposes, and those, of all sorts of quaint shapes, sent up at fêtes and galas.

The Messrs. Spencer have, from time to time, had an abundance of Press appreciations and encomiums visited upon them, but they tell of one particular public reference to their feats with an air of not wholly unalloyed pleasure. Some time back, an article appeared in a certain publication entitled—the article, not the publication—"Fools who Risk their Lives," and, having made reference to various public performers whom they considered worthy of this flattering description, they continued with further examples, under the divisional heading of "Other Fools." Among the latter the name of Spencer loomed largely. The reference was neither correct nor courteous. Of course, we know that accidents will happen, but, with skill at the helm, the danger is reduced to a minimum, and the Spencers hold a remarkable record of apparent immunity.

One of the most important things to do when beginning a balloon ascent—my authority for this statement is of Spencerian origin—is to give perfect freedom to the vessel by at once releasing the "neck-line." Failure to do this was mainly instrumental in bringing about the untimely end of Captain Dale, not long since, at the Crystal Palace.

Balloonists, like poets, are born, not made. Such people must be absolutely impervious to any influence of the nervous system. Among these "nerveless" people I place Stanley Spencer. He indulges in parachute descents like you or I would play cricket or golf. Just think for a moment what this "amusement" is like. Having reached an altitude within shouting distance of Mars, the jerk of a line brings you down for a space like a bolt from the blue. Then you gradually slow down, and are able to land—provided everything has gone safely. Stanley Spencer assured me that he had as keen an appetite for these descents as he had for a good meal. I do not believe such a taste can be acquired.

Percival Spencer has made many remarkable balloon ascents. He once ascended prematurely in India, came down in a jungle, reappearing in two or three days, only to discover that they had written him down dead. He was thus able to revel in the novel experience of reading a flattering obituary of himself.



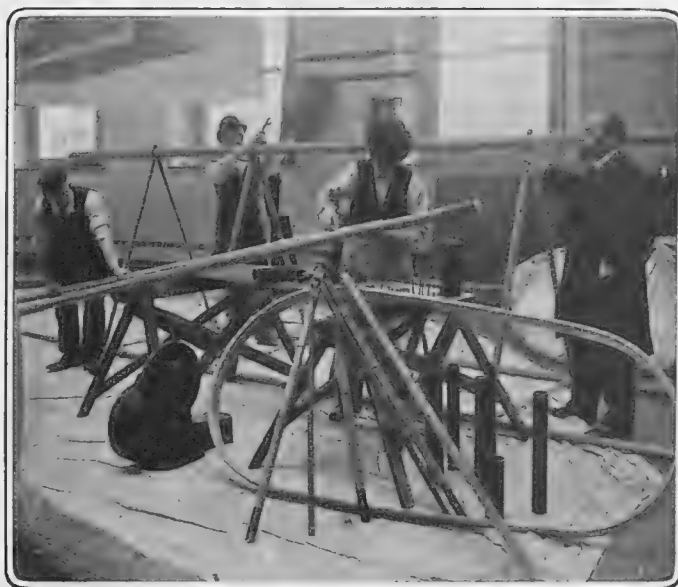
WRESTLING WITH THE PROBLEM: THE THEORY OF THE BIRD'S WING.

Photographs by Campbell and Gray, Cheapside, E.C.

THE PROBLEM OF FLIGHT: INSIDE AN AIR-SHIP FACTORY.



GENERAL VIEW OF THE FACTORY.



THE FRAME-WORK OF A NEW AIR-SHIP.



SAILORS MAKING ROPE FOR A BALLOON.



FINISHING OFF THE NETWORK.



STITCHING UP THE "ENVELOPE."



COMIC-FIGURE BALLOONS, SHOWING THE METHOD OF INFLATION.



HUNTING THE OTTER: SOME TYPICAL SCENES.

- (1) THE RENDEZVOUS. (2) GOING TO THE WATER. (3) ALONG THE BANK. (4) SWIMMING THE STREAM. (5) CLOSE TO THE OTTER.
(6) THE MASTER AND HIS HOUNDS WORKING ALONG THE STREAM.

(See "Small Talk of the Week.")

WHERE THAMES IS PEACEFUL.



MEDMENHAM ABBEY, NEAR MARLOW.



PANGBOURNE CHURCH AND VICARAGE.

Photographs by H. N. King, London.

MR. H. E. MOSS,

A BUILDER OF MANY EMPIRES—TO SAY NOTHING OF THE LONDON HIPPODROME.

"THE most enterprising public entertainer we have in the country," was the endorsement conferred by the Chief Constable of Edinburgh on Mr. Moss, when he was leaving the Capital of Scotland for the Capital of England and the chief city of the Empire. If for the endorsement of one man that of the great public were to be substituted, but little change in the words would have to be made to describe his present position, for Mr. Moss is undoubtedly "the most enterprising public entertainer we have in the world." The enterprises of the Company of which he is President are capitalised at no less than £1,400,000, as most people know now, while throughout the United Kingdom it controls twenty-three places of amusement, which give entertainment, on an average, to half-a-million people a-week, and give employment to thousands every year. Several hundred performers are engaged nightly under his banner, as is evidenced by the fact that at each place of amusement there are sixteen items on the programme, and one item often calls for the services of a dozen people. Roughly speaking, something like £10,000 is paid away every week for salaries, but, in spite of this enormous outlay, Moss's Empires go from success to success and delight the hearts of their shareholders with the dividends they pay. The reason for this success is probably to be found in the fact that among Mr. Moss's many conspicuous gifts two stand out strongly—an extraordinary power of organisation and an unexampled knowledge of the public taste, which enables him to select just the right things to appeal to his patrons. It is not chance, therefore, but accurate knowledge, vast experience, and great judgment which have given Mr. Moss the Midas touch, so that whatever he takes hold of turns to gold. For this reason he has been nicknamed "The Mascot." An amusing instance of the belief in his powers to bring good fortune was furnished some years ago in Edinburgh. During the Carnival which he holds at the Waverley

Market in Edinburgh every year, the weather got very severe, the ponds were frozen over, and the people naturally took advantage of the opportunity to go skating instead of patronising the indoor entertainments. All those connected with the Carnival were, as a consequence, in the dumps. With dramatic opportuneness, however, there came a thaw, and the people began to crowd the building. Walking through the Hall one day, Mr. Moss saw one of the men with a box full of coppers in front of him. He paused for a moment to congratulate the man on his good fortune. "Put your fingers in among them, Mr. Moss," said the man, "and they will turn to sovereigns."

This belief in Mr. Moss's money-making ability is fully warranted by the history of his association with Waverley Market itself. Seventeen or eighteen years ago, he first took it for a season and secured it at a rental of £150. Now, his annual three weeks' season costs him £1800 for rent alone. Waverley was once the scene of one of his most spectacular successes, rendered more vivid by the fact that it was snatched out of a portentous failure. At the time that Jacques, the fasting-man, was proving to the medical profession, and, incidentally, to the public at large, that it was quite possible to live for a month and more without food, Mr. Moss engaged him for a thirty days' fasting exhibition in Edinburgh. To see a man sit in a chair while his weight "grew fine by degrees and beautifully less" did not appeal to the Scotch people's ideas of amusement, and at the end of the thirty days, as Mr. Moss has himself graphically expressed it, "the receipts could have been put in a wine-glass and covered with a gooseberry-leaf." The proceeds of the enterprise were enough to fast on, but that was the only practical purpose they could possibly have

served. "If the people won't come to see Jacques fast," thought Mr. Moss, "perhaps they will go to the other extreme and see him feast?" He took the Waverley Market and announced that on a certain evening Jacques would eat his first meal in public. At once everybody became interested, and on the night in question the great building was full to its utmost capacity, and a very large profit was the result.

The incident is the more interesting in that it gives a clue to the business instinct on which so much depends. To back up that instinct there was even then the experience of many years, for Mr. Moss was born in the theatrical world, his father before him having been famous as an enterprising manager and impresario.

At sixteen, Mr. Moss began his career as part-manager and proprietor of a small travelling Company with a variety entertainment, but it was not a success. Then he took out a diorama of the Franco-German War, a subject in which the public was at that time greatly interested. He was acting-manager, stage-manager, and he accompanied the vocalists whom he engaged to contribute to the concert part of the entertainment. In a month he had repaid the initial

outlay, and at the end of another month he retired with a good balance to his credit. Soon after, he joined his father as manager, and they opened the first Theatre of Varieties at the old Queen's Rooms, in Greenock. So great was the success of the entertainment that, when they desired to renew the lease, the proprietor refused to do so. He had seen the house filled night after night and week after week, and had come to the conclusion that music-hall management must be an easy thing. He therefore determined to go into it himself and make all the money. He carried out the first part of his determination, but he failed dismally in the second, while the Messrs. Moss, father and son, moved over to another hall and continued their success without interruption.

The beginning of the end, which is not yet in sight—for, as everyone knows, Mr. Moss has arranged to build many more Hippodromes, and four are now in the course of construction on the outskirts of leading provincial centres—occurred when he opened the Gaiety, Edinburgh, on Dec. 24, 1877, and laid the foundations of his present fortunes. How his reputation grew was shown when the Hippodrome was to be started. Although the list was scarcely advertised and was open for only one day, the required capital was over-subscribed by £1,500,000. At that house, as at all the others, Mr. Moss's policy is to give the public plenty for its money. He was in the crush-room one evening, watching the performance, when someone whom he did not know came up to him and said, "Look here, Mr. Moss; the programme is very good, but it is much too long." Mr. Moss smiled. "I quite agree with you," he replied; "but"—waving his hand towards the house, which was packed from floor to ceiling—"look at the result."

That result is due to strict attention to every detail, and just now, when the new sensational melodrama which is to be presented in the course of the next two or three weeks is in rehearsal, Mr. Moss devotes no inconsiderable time to discussing all the details connected with the entertainment with Mr. Frank Parker, his indefatigable and clever stage and equestrian director. All the same, however, he finds time to go through the daily and weekly reports which are sent up to him from each of the provincial houses which he controls, reports which not only state the nature of each "turn," but the time it took, the way it was received, and even the state of the weather, which is not without its potent influence on the fortunes of every entertainment.



"HULLO! YES, I'M MOSS."

Photographed exclusively for "The Sketch."

"THE SKETCH" PHOTOGRAPHIC INTERVIEWS.

XLVI.—MR. H. E. MOSS.



"PARDON ME WHILST I FINISH OFF MY CORRESPONDENCE."



"AND SEE MR. FRANK PARKER ABOUT A MATTER——"



"——OR TWO."



"OH, YES, AND HERR SEETH WANTS A WORD WITH MR."



"HOW DO YOU LIKE OUR STABLES?"



"I MAKE A POINT OF BEING ON GOOD TERMS WITH ALL MY ARTISTES."



"OTHERWISE, THEY MIGHT STEP ON MY TOES BY ACCIDENT."



"THERE! NOW I PROPOSE TO——"



"——ESCAPE."

FRESH LEAVES FROM A MOORISH GARDEN

By S. L. BENSUSAN.

Illustrated by R. Forrest.

IX.—HOME AGAIN.

THE untiring rooks come back to the elms with the first-fruits of their morning search, their half-fledged children clamour noisily, blackbirds flit over the dewy lawn as freely as if they knew I forgive their depredations for the sake of their song. I scared half-a-dozen baby rabbits from the vegetables just now, and surprised

the moor-hens taking their black babies for an early swimming-lesson. The farm-labourers are not yet afield on this early June morning, but it seems quite a simple matter for me to be up and in the garden by half-past four; a few weeks of camping have reminded me of the value and freshness of the early hours. A cuckoo calls persistently from one of the apple-trees, reminding me how I heard the familiar note for the first time this year in the great Argan forest, and thought, as I listened to it then, how pleasant the music would sound at home.

If you would enjoy an English garden, leave it in February and come back to it with June. I left a mourn-



PREPARING
DINNER

ful, tempest-tossed place, leafless, disarrayed, and bare, and find now a pleasance cunningly devised by the summer for my delight. If I like to believe the birds are singing to welcome me, the conceit is harmless and not unjustified. Here, at least, they are safe to build and rear their young. No bird-nester may take eggs or young ones, and I turn a deaf ear to the gardener's request that I will, at least, snare the rabbits and shoot the blackbirds, for the sake of fruit and vegetables.

Yet, even here, in the shady walks of this English garden, I find my thoughts straying to the wonderful land I have so lately left, and the pictures painted by the summer day at dawn and twilight and high noon suffer partial effacement. I turn in thought to the tropical retreat in the heart of Marrakesh, a place of strange, heavy-scented flowers and fruit that April had ripened, where I sat with Sidi Bu Bekr and talked of the political situation, while lemon-trees and heliotrope and myrtle and rose bowed in the breezes of late afternoon and we drank green tea and mint out of gold cups, while countless ladies of the harem peeped out from dark corners to see the Unbelievers. If I do but close my eyes and shut out the green lawn, with its high hedges, and old, twisted fruit-trees, many of the strange sights of the past three months will present themselves, unbidden though not unwelcome guests.

I see our little company on the road, Mohammed M'barak, the soldier, riding in front to awe all evil-doers, his long flint-lock gun wrapped up in a tattered case and carried in a manner that suggests more danger to his friends than his enemies. I see the Maalem, who joined us at Djedida and is in charge of the mules, riding on his donkey from mule to mule and calling any animal that lags behind the "son of a Christian and a Jew" or the offspring of a shameless mother, but

ever ready to excuse his own laziness by reminding me that haste kills strong men.

Our mid-day camp under some great fig-tree or in the shadow of some village-wall may not be forgotten; I seem to see the sparrow-hawks and pigeons wheeling overhead in friendly flight, the storks feeding on the plains beyond, the startled village-folk who so seldom see a stranger. The long road passes before me, mile upon mile of hot, stony way, and here or there a well in the desert with Berbers watering their flocks and herds, or a cool orchard bright with scarlet pomegranate-flowers and lemon-trees and palms.

Then I recall our house in Morocco City, with the minaret of the neighbouring mosque towering over it, and the Mueddin whose sonorous voice summoning the city to prayer at most unlikely hours broke so often upon our slumber. How pleasant it was there to sit in the patio open to the sky when we had exhausted for the day the wonders of the bazaars, and Salaam, crouched by his little pans of glowing charcoal, was preparing dinner!

Painful recollections claim their place as my thoughts wander to the Hara, or Leper City, by one of the western gates of Marrakesh, a cluster of white *tapia* houses surrounded by a wall that is always guarded. By day the lepers are free to cry for alms in street and market-place; by nightfall they must be within the Hara gate. I seem to see the slave-market, too, with its human merchandise, young and old trailing round and round at the heels of the auctioneers, while grave, wealthy Moors sit at their ease and purchase men, women, or children as a butcher buys cattle or sheep. Such a sight is not to be forgotten readily, though many a slave in Morocco is better off than a free man.

I recall the sight of vast flocks of sheep and goats coming from the desert places of the South on account of the drought, and the strange people in charge of them, men and women who have never eaten bread, who live almost entirely on the milk of sheep and goats, with a little meat added now and again, and are able, withal, to march day after day through a heat that would be fatal to a white man. Uncouth creatures all, speaking the Shillah language, and seeming quite contented with a life that no convict in a British prison would take in exchange for his own.

And, finally, I wonder why the wonderful country of the Moors is not better known, and why the idle rumours that reach town-keep people from visiting it.

To be sure, the country is disturbed in the North, but we travelled three hundred miles inland south of the disturbed area, with a solitary soldier for escort, with a couple of hundred pounds' worth of horses, mules, and personal effects, at the least, and from start to finish there was no incident sufficiently disagreeable to call for comment here.



EARLY
MORNING

FOUR SEASONS.

BY LEWIS BAUMER.



THE THIRD SEASON: THE SULK.

THE LITERARY LOUNGER.

A PROSPECTUS, headed "Bookshops, Limited," has been issued by a Company which is inviting authors, clergymen, and others to join in starting a number of bookshops in London and all over the country which are to be managed on entirely new lines. Three gentlemen well known in literature are taking part, but their subscriptions amount to the very modest sum of a sovereign each. It is proposed to have a capital of £20,000, and the notion is to improve very much on existing bookshops. It is stated in the prospectus that the proprietors and managers of bookshops have little real knowledge of their business. They rely on publishers' travellers for choice of books, they frequently fail to keep accounts, they conduct their business with almost complete ignorance of the tastes and needs of their customers, and are usually unaware of the new books issued or about to be issued. The bookshops are to be roomy, not overcrowded with books, and will have tables and chairs. Every detail of shop arrangement and fittings is to be specialised, and this principle is to be extended to such details as labels and string.

Letters accompany the prospectus from Sir A. C. Doyle, Messrs. William Archer, G. Bernard Shaw, and H. G. Wells. I take leave to doubt the practicability of the undertaking. It is stated that, if very able bookmen were to manage bookshops and talk to their customers about the books, more books might be sold. But will there? I am writing at present in a Surrey town with a population of nearly twenty thousand. There are two or three bookshops in the town, and one, at least, may fairly be described as very good. It is conducted by a man of the highest intelligence, one both able and willing to guide intelligent readers. He tells me that he estimates the total sale of books in his town at about £2000 a-year. Anyone may count for himself what profit would be left to a bookseller with a turn-over of that amount. He has to pay the running expenses, which are very considerable, and to make allowance for the deterioration of stock—that deterioration which is inevitable even when the bookseller buys with the utmost care. I should doubt whether a net profit of over £200 would result. As a matter of fact, other departments of the business are found more remunerative.

Wherever I am, I make my way to the booksellers' shops, and, generally speaking, I am impressed not with the ignorance of the bookseller, but with his knowledge. It is quite true that the ordinary bookseller is not often a literary critic, but he knows the taste of the

public and he is careful to study it. I find that he is very ready to take trouble in meeting the wants of his customers, a trouble often disproportionate to any benefit which it is possible for him to receive. The real trouble is the discount, and for that I cannot help blaming the want of united action among the booksellers themselves. The net system has done some good, but it has not by any means completely solved the problem. Provided a reasonable sum and no more were allowed in the way of discount, we should see the book-trade revive again all over the land. Till that is done I do not expect a great improvement.

The scheme of "Bookshops, Limited," is altogether insufficient in its provision of capital. For bookshops of the kind wanted, large, central, well furnished, a very considerable provision would have to be made. Four might be started, but I doubt whether it would be possible to arrange for more. The publishers are not likely to forsake their old friends; that is, the new bookshops would be treated just as the rest are treated, and would have to make their calculations on precisely the same basis.

I hear that the Rev. D. C. Tovey has nearly ready the second volume of his admirable edition of Gray's Letters. Mr. Tovey, who is one of our best literary historians, is now the parish priest at Worplesdon, in Surrey.

Mr. Thomas Hardy spent Whitsuntide at Aldeburgh with his friend, Mr. Edward Clodd. He is now staying for a short time in London. American publishers and editors who have been over recently have brought much pressure to bear on Mr. Hardy, with the view of inducing him to write a serial for an American magazine, but I have not heard that he has definitely consented.

At the recent Leipsic Conference, far more

than a thousand booksellers attended from all parts of Germany and Austria. Though the weather was cold and wet and open-air entertainments out of the question, the festivities went well. The shadow on the gathering was the threatened tax upon bound books, a tax which was strongly protested against.

One of the most magnificent books of the autumn will be a Treatise on Portrait Miniatures by Dr. Williamson, which will be published by Messrs. Bell and Sons. It is based upon original research and first-hand information, and will contain five hundred illustrations, giving selected specimens from the most famous collections in the world. The book will be dedicated by special permission to Queen Alexandra.

O. O.



"POPPING THE QUESTION."—VIII. THE RUSTIC STYLE.

"DORIS": A MEMORY.

BY GORDON MEGGY.

JUST when the snowdrops peeped out to inquire whether Spring had really called them, Doris was born. Such a dainty little morsel of pink and white that even the sparrows, looking in through the curtains as they enjoyed their daily meal of bread-crumbs, chirped out the news to their cousins the starlings, who were thinking about building a nest in the water-spout, that an angel had come to bless their nesting-time.

By-and-by, Doris was old enough to scatter the crumbs upon the window-sill herself, and every bird in the garden would come to her boldly to be fed. Sometimes Doris went out with her nurse, and do you think she ever met a dog or a puppy without stopping to speak to it? Not a bit of it. She would take them up in her dainty little bits of arms, when they were not too big, and fondle and caress them, till there was not a puppy in all the village but would frisk up directly he set eyes on her and romp round and round, licking her hands and face. Even the stately old mastiff down the road, who was far too proud to take any notice of his master, would jump up directly she turned the corner and trot up to be patted, with his tail wagging nineteen to the dozen.

When Doris grew older still, the sweetness of her nature, that had so early won the affections of her animal friends, grew to be loved and revered by every living soul, and many a poor old woman or sorrowing mother had Doris to thank for words of comfort and hope, far more valuable than all the hot soup and warm blankets in the world. Every child worshipped her, and when her father died, and she had to go up to London to live with her Aunt Betty, there were scores of little men and women who bathed their pillows in tears for the very pity of losing a friend so dear.

When I first saw Doris, she was standing on the platform of Charing Cross Underground Station, talking to a sweet-faced old lady who held her arm and smiled into her face in a way which plainly told what a joyful thing it was to be with her. She was so tall and slim and had such a graceful, dainty little figure, that I stood awhile in the shadow of the bookstall and watched her. Presently she turned towards the light, and I could see the outline of her face, the wealth of dark hair massed low down upon her neck, and the light which shone from her beautiful, soft brown eyes. But I did not know their colour then, and could see only the light of love and gentleness and purity which shone from their depths and lit up the dearest, sweetest face in all the world.

By-and-by, her attention was attracted by a cripple-child who lay huddled up on a seat near me, and, with a half-sob of pity, she leant over the little fellow, talking to him so prettily that he opened his eyes and smiled up at her out of his pain. And when she bent down and kissed him tenderly upon the forehead, he put his tiny arms round her neck, while his poor mother, wondering whether some angel had been sent to comfort her, sat there with tears of gratitude in her eyes, till my own heart was touched and some note within me began to sing that God had shown me a good woman.

Months afterwards, I met Doris again, this time in a crowded drawing-room. And, when I heard her speak and realised the full charm of her voice and manner, other strings within me began to sing, strings of love and hope and reverence, until quite a symphony was going on and I was afraid everyone must hear my heart beating time.

A year later, all the world had changed and seemed a fairer, better place, for Doris was my wife. And every day I saw something fresh to worship in her, some new light of love and gentleness, of pity and self-sacrifice, until I grew to worship her as I believe no woman has ever been worshipped.

Then a little angel was born, fair and sweet and lovely—but neither so fair nor so sweet nor so lovely as Doris herself—and together we tended her, watching her grow daily fairer till she was four years old. All her mother's love and gentleness were reproduced in Angel, and we watched with pleasure our child's fearless affection for every living thing. And when she lisped out a wish to possess a

tiny puppy for her very own, my darling adding her entreaties, we journeyed one day to London, taking our little one, to purchase her a playfellow, and making this an excuse for a day's holiday and a visit to Aunt Betty.

Bobby was an Irish terrier some six months old, and he was purchased directly we set eyes on him, for Angel took a sudden fancy to his funny brown face and great, ungainly paws, and would not part from him; while he, in turn, seemed ready to break his heart with sorrow when for a moment she left his side. So together we took our prize to Aunt Betty, and she, dear soul, ever ready with a smile and a word of welcome for Doris or her child, knew not whether to admire most Angel or Bobby, or the sudden attachment which had sprung up between them at the first moment of meeting.

It was afternoon when we set out on our return, and how well I remember the bright sky, rosy-tinted even in London with the hues of an autumn sunset, and the parting wave of the hand which Aunt Betty gave us from her little home in Chelsea! Angel would in no wise be parted from her dog, and he walked quite quietly beside her, his leader looped to her tiny wrist, occasionally looking up, his tongue hanging out of his black mouth, to catch her smiles, or pausing when she stopped every few yards, as children will, to bestow on him some fresh caress. At the corner stood a little cripple-boy, broom in hand, to whom my darling would give coppers from her purse, asking him sweetly of his infirmity, for she could never see pain or affliction or want unmoved.

But while she bent talking to the boy, we heard a sudden cry, and looked up to see Angel, the traffic at its thickest, trotting across the road in hot pursuit of the dog, which had escaped her. And then, before I had fully comprehended the thing, Doris rushed madly forward, crying out to her child, and both were caught, before my eyes, and dashed down amid the passing carriages. Ah, God! that moment of intense anguish stunned me, and it was the cripple-boy who half-ran, half-limped to the child and dragged her from beneath the very wheels, while I rushed to where my dear one lay, crushed and bleeding. My God, my God! as I sit here writing of this thing my flesh creeps and my eyes fill at the memory of that ghastly sight!

She was borne to St. George's Hospital, where an operation was performed. Nor did she fail when, hours afterwards, she became conscious, to breathe my name and inquire for the fate of her child. But they would not let me see her then or for many weeks afterwards, and when, at last, I came to her bedside, the dear face I loved so well was wan and thin, and the little hand I had held in mine so often scarce could raise itself to greet me.

For months she lay there, too weak to be moved, except into a private ward. October, November, December passed, and January dawned, but saw no change, except a look of weariness and hopelessness which ate into my very heart. And, at last, towards the end of the month, they summoned me to her early one morning, telling me the end was near. Oh, my love, my love, my love! how well I remember the happy smile with which you bade me guard our child and be brave for her sake, and the last loving look in your dear eyes, which closed for ever as I held you in my arms.

Years have passed since then, and to-day Angel has gone out into the world to share her life with another. Only Bobby is left to me. Bobby grown grey, his eyes dim with age, yet ever faithful. Even as I write, he comes whining to my side to lick my hand and to ask for the mistress he begins to miss even now. But I have thoughts neither for Bobby nor for Angel, but only for another wedding-day, twenty years ago. Sometimes, when the shadows fall, or when Angel has been playing some old song which *she* used to love, I seem to hear her soft voice bidding me be brave and sending me sweet messages from the long ago. And I see her face as I saw it for the first time on that dim-lit station, and pray that the time may not be long ere I join her in that land of shadows and mystery whither all must go but from which none return.

THE FASCINATION OF THE FEUILLETON.

BY PERCY GREENBANK.

I.

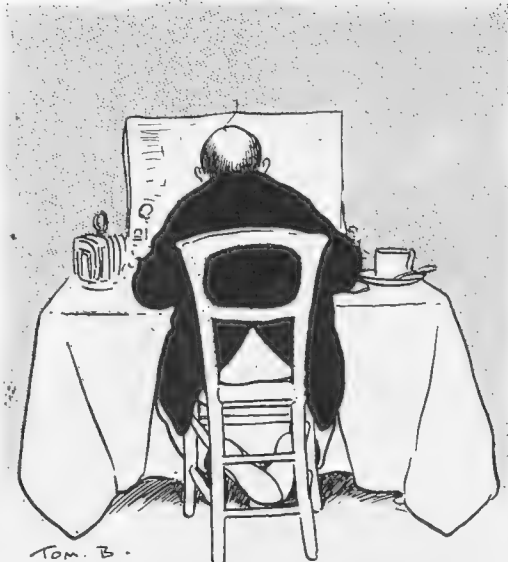
In far suburban Notting Hill,
Where dark-green 'buses go,
And all is very calm and still
And strictly *comme il faut*,
There dwelt for years a familiee,
As happy as they well could be.

II.

Papa, Mamma, and dear Aunt Jane,
Who'd lived with them for long;
Then children four, let me explain,
A chubby, gladsome throng:
Adolphus, Maud, and Isabel,
And little brother Jim as well.

III.

Now ev'ry morn they all came down
Upon the stroke of eight,
For Father had to go to town,
And couldn't breakfast late;
And very often Father read
The paper while he breakfasted



FATHER READ THE PAPER
WHILE HE BREAKFASTED.

IV.

The journal that he read was not
The *Times* or *Daily News*;
The *Telegraph* he hadn't got
The patience to peruse.
He vowed the penny papers stale,
And always took the *Daily Mail*.

V.

One leading feature, you'll admit,
Which makes this paper pay,
Is that it gives a little bit
Of fiction every day;
And Father glanced at this in brief,
Whilst munching ham and potted beef.

VI.

And when he'd slammed the door and run
To catch the City train,
Then all the others, one by one
(Including dear Aunt Jane),
Pounced down upon the *Daily Mail*,
To read the most exciting tale.

VII.

As week by week the story ran,
In interest it grew;
They dreamt of it, and soon began
To wonder all day through
What fancies of the author's brain
The next instalment might contain.

VIII.

Till matters came to such a pitch
On one eventful day,
That Mother could not sew a stitch,
The children could not play;
They wished to-morrow might arrive
And bring them Chapter Ninety-five.

IX.

And, almost ere the morning broke
Papa—who'd hardly slept—
From fitful slumbering awoke,
And dressed and downward crept:
And Mother quickly did her hair
And followed Father down the stair.



THE FASCINATION OF THE FEUILLETON.—(Continued.)



XI.

He put it into Mother's
hand,
But Father snatched
it out;
Aunt Jane then fell on
Father (and
Aunt Jane was fairly
stout).
With flashing eyes and
faces pale,
They struggled for that
Daily Mail.



XII.

The children crowded all about
And watched them in dismay;
Until Adolphus, with a shout,
Plunged headlong in the fray,
While Isabel soon followed him,
And Maud and little brother Jim.

XIII.

It was a mighty tug-of-war
In which they did engage
(The *feuilleton* they struggled for
Was on the final page); [heads,
But while they banged and bumped their
The *Daily Mail* got torn to shreds

X.

And there they found
the children four,
With Auntie in a
shawl,
All waiting just behind
the door,
Inside the entrance-
hall.
At seven-thirty, safe
and sound,
The newsboy brought
the paper round.



XIV.

Experience will sel-
dom fail
Some useful points
to teach:
They still take in the
Daily Mail,
But get a copy
each;
Including little brother
Jim—
The *feuilleton* appeals
to him.

LIFE IN OUR VILLAGE.

BY GUNNING KING.



V.—“SATURDAY NIGHT IN THE VILLAGE INN.”

A NOVEL IN A NUTSHELL.

THE RESIGNATION OF MR. JUSTICE STRODE.

By HAROLD WHITE.

THE attempts made to force a retirement on Mr. Justice Strode were frequent and varied, but persuasions, pensions, even a Peerage, had failed to draw him from the Bench. It may have been a sense of the loss his unappreciative country would sustain, or it may have been an inherent spirit of contradiction; but there he sat like a limpet, dispensing justice untempered by mercy, and displaying a temper unjustified by anything. Witnesses who appeared before him were ordered change and rest for months, K.C.'s became rustling masses of flustered impotence; and as for the junior Bar, the most self-satisfied soon longed for the ground to gape and swallow them up.

Such being the repute of his ineradicable Lordship, few people would have recognised him, one sunny day in August, puffing and splashing in the cooling waves, his terrifying whiskers smoothed down and his ruddy features aglow with satisfaction. As a matter of fact, the spot was, or appeared to be, deserted, lying as it did at least two miles from Birchley-on-Sea, where the Judge was enjoying the early days of the Long Vacation. The air was invigorating, the golf-links not too exacting for a man getting on in years, his importance was duly recognised at the hotel, and there were some charming women. The Judge, it may be added, like most martinets, had an eye for the ladies. These pleasing subjects for reflection and the delights of the exercise had given him quite an air of *bonhomie*, which promptly changed to his usual expression of indignant severity when he turned to the shore and saw someone sitting on his clothes.

The trespasser was a long young man, who lounged lazily, with his straw-hat tilted over his eyes, and the Judge did not like young men, especially when they regarded him absolutely without timidity or even respect. However, at the moment he was too much blown with his exertions to do anything but splutter.

The young man put his hat back and said, in language familiar in the Courts of Law, "Your Lordship will doubtless remember the case of Hanks v. Stimson?"

The Judge could only glare and splutter again.

"In that case, your Lordship will recollect, I appeared for the plaintiff."

His Lordship was half out of the water, and the wind was chilly on his wet shoulders.

"What is this buffoonery?" he said, in tones of wrath.

The young man ignored the question and resumed the tones of arguing counsel.

"In summing up, your Lordship uttered what, of course, can only have been an *obiter dictum* on the subject of the demeanour and capability of the counsel engaged."

"Get off my clothes!" shouted the Judge. It was really getting very cold.

The young man rose, disclosing behind him a solid-looking Gladstone-bag.

"It consisted largely of references to myself. Your Lordship came to the conclusion that I wasted your Lordship's time and that I bungled my client's case. That decision must be reversed—in fact, I am going to reverse it."

As he uttered the last words with a cool and measured utterance, the young man gathered up the clothes and opened the bag.

"Leave those clothes alone!" cried the Judge, beside himself with anger.

"Now, in my opinion," said the young man, carefully folding the Judge's trousers; "I did it rather well."

The Judge looked at the beach between them, but it was rough and flinty.

"I warn you, sir, I warn you of the consequence of this!" he gasped to his tormentor, whose whole attention was taken up with the Judge's coat.

"As for my demeanour, I think it did me the utmost credit. I never lost my temper with you once."

The Judge's teeth were chattering now with cold.

"I will have you prosecuted for theft, sir, for stealing my clothes!" he stuttered.

The young man threw down a bundle from the bag, into which he put the Judge's clothes, and carefully locked it, putting the key in his pocket.

"But I'm not stealing your clothes. There they are, in the bag. I shall leave it with you. Of course, on a point of law I should differ from you with deference, but I think the case is clear."

By this time the Judge was performing what might or might not have been a "fandango" in the water.

"Besides," added the young man, displaying the other bundle, "exchange is no robbery."

"I don't want other clothes. I insist upon having my own or none at all," said the Judge.

"Oh, very well! None at all, then," calmly replied his adversary. "Now I put it to you, is it right, is it seemly, is it in any way tolerable, that an elderly gentleman should play havoc with a young man's future prospects just because his lunch hasn't agreed with him? That's my submission to your Lordship."

"I w-warn y-y-you, sir," stammered the Judge, "that th-this is li-little b-b-better than attempted m-murder."

"But I'm not preventing you from putting on these clothes—in fact, I recommend it. At your years it cannot be wise to stand in this wind without drying yourself."

The Judge glared shiveringly, but stepped gingerly forward over the stones, while the young man held up some of the articles of apparel invitingly. Then it was that the Judge noticed that in shape, in size, and pattern they might have been fashioned by some music-hall comedian in his dreams. For a moment he gazed at the preposterous trousers made of an appalling check, the ridiculous little evening-dress coatee, and the monstrous "dickey," and even in the moment of his dire necessity he drew the line.

"Young man," he said, with difficulty disguising his speechless indignation beneath a pleading air, "if you have any gentlemanly feeling about you—"

"No good," said the young man, lighting a cigarette. "If your Lordship pleases, I will continue my address. My only client, his mind poisoned by your Lordship's remarks, conceived doubts as to my abilities and left me. Nothing remains for me but to take an enforced rest—I propose to go by the boat to-day."

His Lordship gave a little shiver of pleasure. His adversary was going, then.

"Oh, there's plenty of time!" said the young man, noticing it. "Well, such being the position of affairs——" And for five long minutes the junior counsel stated his case.

The breeze blew keener and keener. The Judge furtively dried himself, but still presented an unprotected surface to the wind, and still the young man went on. At last, with a sigh of desperation, the Judge reached for the trousers and put them on. That done, he had to wait for a further access of courage before he could bring himself to attack the coat. Then his chest was still bare, and, after another desperate pause, the absurd "dickey" was assumed. As he felt the monstrous collar against his whiskers, the Judge vowed that for this a dire and dreadful vengeance should be wreaked.

"Well, now we'll get back," said the young man, carelessly. "You carry the bag."

For a moment the Judge took counsel with himself, and came to the conclusion that he must dissemble. He would accompany this young man until they met an outlying policeman, and then for justice! So, without a word, they rose, climbed the cliff-path, and walked along the new road in the direction of Birchley. If you can imagine a stern, elderly gentleman comporting himself with great dignity in a suit of clothes designed for one of the "Macs," you can obtain some idea of the appearance presented by the Judge. But it was as he had thought—that is, up to a point. After they had passed one carriage,

the occupants of which were quite cured of their respective diseases at the mere sight, they met that outlying policeman.

"Here!" shouted the Judge, and the policeman slowly turned his rustic head.

"Take this young man in charge!" demanded the Judge, fervid with impatience.

The policeman dumbly gazed, till some surprise began to slowly creep over his face.

"Do you hear what I say? Take him in charge!" cried the Judge.

"Whoy?" came from the policeman, with an effort.

"Because he's—he's stolen my clothes."

The policeman looked at the young man, who stood indifferently by, and noticed no extra clothing about him.

"Wheer's 'e got 'em?" he asked.

"They're in the bag!" snapped the Judge, irritably.

It took some time for that fact to work its way into the policeman's intelligence.

"Boot yew've got t' bag yewrsel'," he said.

"Yes, yes; but I tell you he's stolen them! Can't you believe me, man?" roared his Lordship, who could not deal patiently with a fool.

For a while the policeman surveyed the trousers, the coatee, and the "dicky" with friendly interest, and then a grin threatened to swallow his ears.

"Zurcus, loikely," he remarked.

It was more than the Judge could bear. He shook the constable by the arm.

"I tell you——," he began.

"Naouw, naouw, none o' that!" said the constable, warmly. "Yew let be. Tak' yewr 'ans arf, Oi say, or Oi'll tak' yew for a droonken vagabond."

"You'd better come away," suggested the young man, persuasively, as one does to a friend in a condition of convivial excitement.

"Yew art to be ashamed o' yewrsel' at yewr age. Naouw be arf with yew or Oi'll tak' ye oop."

For a moment the Judge fumed impotently.

"Be arf, Oi say!" threatened the policeman, and pointed with his massive hand down the road.

"You—you shall pay for this!" his Lordship almost hissed, and strode along again with the bag.

The nearer they got to the town, the faster strode the Judge. At first, a few stragglers gazed with surprise and amusement; then small boys began to collect and run by the side; then, like an ever-increasing snowball, the knot became a crowd, through which his Lordship burst to gain the steps of his hotel.

This was the crisis. Till now he had been the object of ridicule of mere strangers; here they knew who he was. Could he, in a savage dash for his room, escape their notice? Alas, it happened to be the quarter-of-an-hour before lunch! Hard by the door on the verandah were grouped the lady visitors. For an instant there was a pause of gasping wonder—then a titter, and, as he ran up the stairs, a roar.

In a few seconds the Judge dashed the hateful garments off, and in ten minutes he was clad once more in seemly attire, but even while he tied his tie he heard the departing steamer's horn. His enemy had escaped him for that time.

It is a remarkable thing that each and every person in authority to whom the Judge resorted in hot haste, with schemes of pursuit and retribution, turned away as he concluded his tale and almost inaudibly muttered something about "saying no more about it." What though the matter flared up in all the papers—with illustrations, horrible to relate—all that people said was, "Say no more about it." There was a conspiracy about it. Justice, the Judge could only think, was no more to be had in England.

At last, one morning, the Lord Chancellor went forth with a smile. In his pocket he bore, and bore with fortitude, the resignation of Mr. Justice Strode.

OH, HANSOM!

THE RECORD OF MY LAST DRIVE.

I knew a cabman—now I know him not—
Whose looks implied the frequent festive "pot."
I knew Miss B.—who lives next door but one—
Ah! Beauty frozen! Mem'ry keeps thee hot.

It rained that night we sought the muddy rank
(Whene'er I "dress," it pours as from a tank).
Miss B. remarked—then we began to run:
The thoughts I thought must ever be a blank.

"Oh, Ruddy One! Now list to our appeal.
Oh! hie to Milton Street, for evening meal—
'Tis fifty-two!" We mount the step in haste,
And wipe her dress—my trousers—on the wheel.

Miss B. remarked—and then we started down
The road. But ah! the mud from all the town
Came flying in—its virtues not to waste—
And specked our evening-dress with spots of brown.

"Oh! Let the window down!" I hasty cried.
Miss B. remarked—but then in anguish sighed.
The window crashed, and hit me on the hat,
And sprinkled gen'rous soot-drops far and wide.

It was a hansom—fresh from stable come,
Scented with stale tobacco, mixed with rum;
Its ventilation ample—more than that.
Miss B. remarked—then sneezed, and then was dumb.

For lo! As shambling on our sloppy way
We stanch'd the mud, down went the steed to pray,
Bang went Miss B. against the misty glass,
And made her nose e'en still more *retroussée*.

Miss B. remarked—but then the horse upstood,
Lifted his voice and smote against the wood;
The ruddy one adjured him on to pass
While cats around surveyed their o'erdue food.

At last! At last!! Our destination's here.
The glass flies up, bestows its muddy tear.
Quick we dismount to pay our Jehu off,
And then of mud the other wheel we clear.

Ten shillings paid! (Quite fare enough, I think);
We up the steps like drown'd rodents slink.
Miss B. remarks—premonitory cough—
The door opes wide; the gaslight makes us blink.

"Tell Mrs. Gudgeon——!—What? Ne'er heard the name?
But this is Milton Street?" "No. Not the same!
'Tis Wilson Street—your man misunderstood!
Five miles the wrong direction cabby came!"

(Miss B. remarks at length.)

Slowly we go! The cab-ranks empty all!
Our "Sangster" turns upon us! On we crawl!
A shelt'ring 'bus (conductor very rude).
Miss B. remarks——! Now let oblivion fall!!

Oh, hansom! Thou refin'd torture! Hark!
Thou'st lost my custom, spoilt my clothes! And mark—
Thou'rt musty, dirty, clumsy, awkward, old,
Fit for the darkest ages of the dark!

Oh, hansom! Thou extortioner!! I see
Thee go the longest road persistently.
A relic thou! When shalt thy tale be told?
And—worst of all—Miss B. won't speak to me.

ARTHUR STURGESS.



HEARD IN THE GREEN-ROOM



THE next new play in the West-End will be produced to-morrow (Thursday) night. This is "Cousin Kate," which Mr. Hubert H. Davies has written for Messrs. Harrison and Maude's use at the Haymarket. When I say "has" written, I really ought to say "had" written, for, as a matter of fact, Messrs. Harrison and Maude secured this play by young Mr. Davies long before his "Mrs. Gorrings's Necklace" was produced at Wyndham's Theatre. "Cousin Kate," I find, contains a fine feminine character that would have been played by that charming actress, Miss Winifred Emery, had her state of health permitted, and an excellent part for her clever husband, Mr. Cyril Maude, who will on this occasion blossom forth as a Rale Son of Erin.

When Miss Winifred Emery is well enough to return from her delightful little retreat off the Bexhill coast, she will, I am informed, make her welcome reappearance at the Haymarket in a new play adapted from the French by Mr. Seneschal.

It is only right to inform you, however, that this play from the French will *not* be, as some little while ago announced in certain quarters, an adaptation of "Le Secret de Polichinelle" as recently produced with such great success in Paris. Messrs. Harrison and Maude did, as I duly stated, acquire the English rights of this French play, but they have abandoned their "option" on that piece.

As to certain other forthcoming new plays, I may herewith be allowed, perhaps, to give you a few predictions. In the first place, I have to say that, now the Poet Laureate's little Scottish drama, "Flodden Field" (the first "Flodden Field" play, I fancy, since the year before our late Queen was born), has been produced upon a proper stage, we may expect some actor-manager like Mr. Tree (if not Sir Henry Irving himself) to produce our Laureate's long-ago written tragedy concerning the late great Savonarola. This play was, as I hinted aforetime, penned many years ago with a view to suiting Sir Henry.

To the long list of dramas made out of novels recently mentioned by me in *The Sketch*, I have now to add a few others. The next play of this sort to appear will in all probability be the adaptation of "Lorna Doone" which was secured some months ago by Miss Annie Hughes. Three performances of this play are to be given in the course of a few days, with Mr. Hayden Coffin as John Ridd, a character which one would think would, in a physical sense, have been better suited to Miss Hughes's husband, Mr. Edmund Maurice, who is now playing his original part of Taffy in "Trilby" at His Majesty's.

I have long ago stated in these columns that the originally announced "authorised" dramatisation of "Lorna Doone" was that written a few years ago by Mr. Horace W. Newte. But there seem to be several stage adaptations of this great story.

Still more plays adapted from novels are threatened. These include a dramatisation of Mr. Eden Phillpotts' romance, "The



OFF THE STAGE: MRS. BOURCHIER (MISS VIOLET VANBRUGH).

Photograph by R. W. Thomas, Cheapside.



MR. MARTIN HARVEY AS NAPOLEON IN "THE EXILE."

Photograph by the London Stereoscopic Company, Regent Street, W.

Children of the Mist," and yet another stage-version of Jane Austen's "Pride and Prejudice." I also hear of an adaptation from Chaucer forsooth, for someone, greatly daring, is writing a play of that ancient bard's "Canterbury Tales."

One of the most interesting play-writing experiments I have heard of is a new Jewish drama which Mr. Isaac Cohen is to produce in the immediate neighbourhood of the London Ghetto, namely, the Pavilion Theatre, Whitechapel, a playhouse generally described as "The Drury Lane of the East," owing to the magnificence of its productions. The present title of this Hebrew drama is "Under the Altar."

Whenever a successor is wanted to "A Chinese Honeymoon," which has now passed its seven hundredth performance at the Strand, Mr. Frank Curzon will select another play by Mr. George Dance. This is the piece which I long ago announced as "The Ladies' Paradise." Mr. Dance tells me that he now thinks of calling it "Mademoiselle Paris." The music is by Mr. Ivan Caryll.

Another musical play with which Mr. Caryll is concerned is "The Dog-Trainer," the book of which is by Mr. Seymour Hicks. This play is to be produced by the Messrs. Gatti at the Adelphi in the autumn.

Mr. Lewis Waller having decided, after all, to take the Imperial, he will start there in November with the new adaptation of "Ruy Blas" prepared for him by Mr. John Davidson the Poet, and mentioned by me some months ago. If I mistake not, Mr. Davidson has not been represented on our stage since he adapted Coppée's "Pour la Couronne" for Mr. Forbes-Robertson.

By the way, Mr. Forbes-Robertson, who presently finishes his season at the New Theatre, will sail for America—the native land of his charming wife, Miss Gertrude Elliott—on Sept. 12. Mr. Robertson tells me that he has decided to make his next new production a drama written by Miss Margaret Young and entitled "The Edge of the Storm." No date of production is yet fixed. Mr. and Mrs. Forbes-Robertson are sure of a warm welcome in America.

KEY-NOTES

REALLY, Covent Garden is surpassing all expectation this year. The Opera Management has rightly taken the view that it is impossible to be too catholic in its selection of works to be performed, if it desires to capture the attention of the public. Therefore, it ranges from Wagner to Donizetti, carefully making sure that Donizetti shall take his modern way to popularity by commonplace performances in the main, although in the ensemble set upon a brilliant level; while Wagner is given with a solid sort of excellence which brings every critic to the feet of the Syndicate, and which, in its admiration of the Wagnerian performances, almost tries to persuade the world of criticism to suppose that Donizetti was a man really worthy of consideration and of circumspect analysis.

Was Donizetti a genius? That is a question which may be lightly answered, affirmatively or negatively, according to one or another standpoint—views which, in the long run, however, can be proved to be not irreconcilable. May one describe him, to sum up, as a genius

the ultimate line of beauty conceived, as one may imagine, by Wagner himself. Vocally, Van Rooy was superb; but, even outside this artistic standpoint, he maintained his immense reputation by reason of the poetry, the intensity, and the depth of feeling with which he realised the significance of Wagner's creation. Herr Knoté's Walther was extremely vigorous, although it can scarcely be said that it was as beautiful as, say, Jean de Reszke's interpretation of the part. Herr Knoté is a somewhat hard singer. He is energetic, indeed, both histrionically and vocally; and the part of Walther is so full of poetry, inspiration, suggestiveness, and significance that it seemed something of a pity that, in the place of these qualities, excellent though Knoté's singing was, we should have rather the touch of the rhetorician. The chorus was really excellent. Only once (that was at Munich, not at Bayreuth) have I experienced a finer artistic ending of the second Act than that afforded to us on this occasion at Covent Garden. It should be added that Frau Gleiss's Eva, Frau Deppe's Magdalena, Herr Reiss's David, and Herr Geis's Beckmesser were all admirably in the picture. The



THE NEW ZEALAND BAND, WHICH PERFORMED RECENTLY BY ROYAL COMMAND AT THE EARL OF ONSLOW'S SEAT, CLANDON PARK, BEFORE THE PRINCE AND PRINCESS OF WALES. (CONDUCTOR: LIEUTENANT T. HERD.)

Photograph by W. E. Wright and Sons, Forest Gate.

in a hurry? Splendidly gifted, endowed with all the gifts that lie in the hands of the Muse of Music, he was pursued by a kind of physical impetuosity which quite destroyed the solidarity of his work, and which destroyed also the essential permanence of his musical essays; for essays they only can be called, even though they give opportunities to occasional singers who belong to the school admired of so typical an eighteenth-century master as Dr. Charles Burney (to do justice to that excellent man who recognised Gluck as the greatest of all possible musicians—a most intelligent if not a very intellectual judgment).

The lesson of late success, however, was never more definitely proved than it was in the case of Wagner. It was a re-hearing of "Die Meistersinger" two or three days ago at Covent Garden which impelled us to that conclusion. The less Wagner's music was appreciated, the harder he worked, the more insistently he maintained his superiority. Therefore, such a score as that of "Die Meistersinger" became absolutely stupendous by reason of the sheer and mere fact that, unrecognised as he was, he determined to prove to himself how far he could go in the making of that counterpoint, that unity of many thoughts, which were his in so extreme a degree that they may be compared to the long flight of the swallow that leads one to forgetfulness by reason of its disappearance. Perhaps, however, this comparison is over-fanciful, and one may leave the subject with a note upon the performance at Covent Garden to which reference has already been made.

The central figure of the opera, the hero (as Carlyle would have suggested) of the scheme, is, of course, Hans Sachs. The part was taken by Herr Van Rooy, who reached, one may record enthusiastically,

Beckmesser was particularly worthy of praise. He did not play it in so burlesque a manner as is common to exponents of the part; but he added a sort of grotesque seriousness, a persuasive sort of gravity, to his impersonation which made one almost sorry for the unavoidable "ragging"—if so modern a phrase be permitted—scene in which he is expelled from the society of the humorous.

The performance of Dr. Edward Elgar's setting of Cardinal Newman's "Dream of Gerontius" for the first time in London at the new Westminster Cathedral, under the immediate patronage of Cardinal Vaughan, was a highly impressive event. Elgar himself conducted, and the music went extremely well. That is to say a very great deal, for the work is extremely difficult; conceived with amazing profundity of thought, worked out with an even, more amazing employment of every resource of modern technique, the exactions which it makes on every individual connected with its performance are tremendous. The chorus on this occasion, selected from the North Staffordshire District Choral Society, was really splendid; and Miss Muriel Foster's interpretation of the Angel's part was wonderfully fine: the intensity with which she sang (and evidently felt) the part was very impressive, a word which one but seldom applies to the work of any singer. Dr. Ludwig Wüllner in the part of Gerontius somewhat overstepped the customary line of restraint that one expects from singers of oratorio; the result was that he persuaded one strongly of his sincerity, even though at times he sacrificed something to make that persuasion possible. Mr. Ffrangcon Davies sang admirably well, and, on the whole, the occasion may be described as a memorable one. . . . The customary concerts of the week have been numerous enough, but not of particular importance. COMMON CHORD.



Police-Traps—The Dust Problem—The Race in Ireland—A Petrol Famine.

THE split in the Cabinet may result in the shelving of one or both the Bills which are to bring us surcease from the police persecution which, in Surrey particularly, is becoming almost unbearable. I have only just heard of a case of holding-up by the myrmidons of the law on the Sutton-Epsom road which is nothing short of scandalous. A driver of a motor-bicycle with an *avant-train* attached, in which his wife was seated, knowingly entered a police-trap, and accordingly so slowed his machine that cyclists passed him, travelling quite two feet to his one. His speed was nothing in excess of eight miles per hour at the outside, and his progress threatened no one. Notwithstanding, out came the blue-coated gentry from their lair, with their usual parrot-cry that he was travelling at "twenty-five miles a hour" and that they must have his name and address. Subsequent inquiries revealed the fact that complaints as to motors had been made by some local big-wig "J.P.," and the officers themselves admitted that they must account for their time spent on the road by a decent haul of victims. That such a state of things should be called into existence by the prejudice of some narrow-minded bigot is nothing short of a scandal in a country where at least some semblance of justice and fairness is presumed to obtain at times.

The effect of the late dry weather has been to urge upon the attention of all thinking automobilists the crying necessity that exists for some practical solution of the dust problem. I do not mean a solution which shall preserve the occupants of a car from invading dust; that can be and is adequately effected by properly disposed if rather unpicturesque-looking screens. What is required and what must shortly be discovered are some means of abating the terrible clouds of dust raised by speedy cars when passing over unwatered country-roads in dry weather. This nuisance—for a great nuisance and annoyance it undoubtedly is to all other users of and dwellers by the highways—will ultimately raise ten times more antagonism towards automobilism than speed-driving within reasonable limits. Much of the trouble is provoked by cars being too low-built, with boxes and other raffle placed below the frame, to say nothing of exhaust outlets from silencers blowing straight out on to the ground; but there still remains a dust-producing faculty which must be dealt with, and that right soon.

It has been whispered that His Majesty the King, notwithstanding that Royal assent has been given to the Gordon Bennett Bill, is much opposed to the holding of this competition in Ireland, on account of the regrettable incidents of the unfinished Paris-Madrid race. It was even hinted that the King might make use of his position as Patron of the Automobile Club of Great Britain and Ireland to stop the race; but, with the date now so close at hand and all the arrangements so nearly complete, the race is not likely to be interfered with. One cannot but admire the courage of the men who will steer the flying road-engines over the Irish course, with all the details of the murderous Paris-Madrid fiasco fresh in their memories. Certainly, with the smaller number of cars upon the road, and a margin of no less than seven minutes between each, a much larger factor of safety is introduced. The course is undoubtedly in parts ill-adapted for high speeds, and the danger will arise should one driver attempt to pass another at high speed upon the sections which really offer only width enough for one vehicle, or round some of the corners which, to judge by the photographs already published, would make a Baby Peugeot on her top-speed wag her tail to an awesome tune. However, we can only hope for the best.

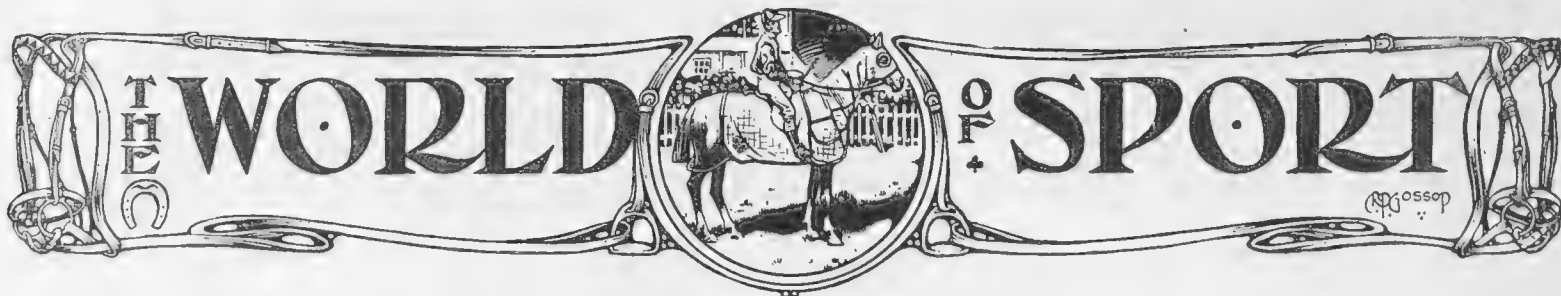
Automobilists in this country are unpleasantly conscious of the present probability of a petrol famine. This was, indeed, experienced to a small but nevertheless sufficiently inconvenient extent just prior to the Whitsuntide holidays, when in some parts of the Metropolis, at least, spirit was not to be had for love nor money. At the present moment, the large bulk of petrol used in this country is distilled on the other side of the Atlantic, and shortage in supply is not likely to be thrust desirably outside the region of the probable until refining the crude oil is undertaken on a large scale in this country. If it pays our American cousins to refine at home and export the distillate, the production of petrol on English soil should surely show, now that the consumption is increasing so rapidly, a good margin of profit to those enterprising enough to undertake it. If it cannot be made to pay here, then the sooner our inventors turn their attention to carburisation with heavy oil, the better for the future of the industry and pastime.

DUKE OF CONNAUGHT.



THE DUKE OF CONNAUGHT ON HIS TEN HORSE-POWER WOLSELEY.

Photograph taken at the Royal Hospital, Kilmainham, by Lafayette, Dublin.



Ascot—Selections—Getting Off—Summer Steeplechases—Handicapping.

THE meeting on the Royal Heath is the racing fixture of the whole year. Ascot stands where it did. The Clock Tower, the rhododendrons, the furze, and the flowers are there. The stands are spick-and-span, and the rings look clean and up-to-date. It is hoped that the gathering at Ascot this week will be the biggest of the century, as their Majesties the King and Queen are to grace the meeting by their presence, and, as I have said many times before, Royalty is a big draw at a fashionable meeting. The Americans have come over in shoals to see the racing, and Continental sportsmen will do the meeting in large numbers. Major Clement has worked hard throughout the winter in preparing the race-track, and the result is perfect going. I feel confident myself that the course could be made permanently perfect by digging down a couple of feet and creating an artificial chalk subsoil. Of course, the first outlay would be enormous, but the return would be equally great, for we should never again hear of stumped-up horses at Ascot, while fields at all the meetings would yield well.

Of course, the chief dish of the Ascot Meeting, from a speculator's point of view, will be the Royal Hunt Cup, which should be won by Roe O'Neill or Hazafi, while I am told St. Brendan has been heavily backed for a place. The Ascot Derby looks a good thing for Chaucer. The St. James's Palace Stakes ought to go to Rock Sand, who is a good animal in a bad three-year-old vintage year. The Three-Year-Old Triennial on Friday may go to Sun Rose. The Gold Cup will, I take it, be a match between William the Third and Rising Glass, but, unless I am out in my reckoning, the first-named ought to win in a canter. Sceptre has only to start to win the Hardwicke Stakes, and John o' Gaunt may win the Windsor Castle Stakes. The Wokingham Stakes on Friday will attract a big field, but the result of the Hunt Cup may have a big bearing on the race, and it is a good plan, often followed by the professional backers, to watch the racing for the Hunt Cup from the bottom of the Lawn and pick out the horse leading a distance from home to back for the Wokingham Stakes. As often as not, the winner is discovered by this plan. Very few people, by-the-by, are aware that the races at Ascot finish uphill.

I am very pleased to know that some of our old jockeys have sunk their insular prejudice at last and have tardily arrived at the conclusion that it is necessary to get off well to be able to win races. The place to wait is in front, and I contend that the main secret of the success of the American jockeys, like Sloan and the Reiffs, was their getting off directly the advance-flag fell and remaining in front as long as they were able to. Again, the American jockeys never take a pull at their horses in the middle of a race, and they do not try to cut matters too fine at the winning-post. It was no uncommon thing for Sloan to win races by two clear lengths, and that is how backers like their horses to win. Half the objections for bumping, crossing, and boring would be

avoided if the jockeys on "certainties" were to take their proper place in front and never allow themselves to be hampered and interfered with by horses that, on the book, should not be within lengths of the lead. The waiting policy at racing is as dead as the dodo.

It is very nearly if not quite ten years since I suggested to Messrs. Frail, through the columns of *The Sketch*, that they should have summer steeplechasing at Windsor, as is done at Auteuil. I selected the Windsor course because it is bordered by the Thames, whence an everlasting water-supply could be obtained. Perhaps the King's meadows are too valuable for flat-racing to be given up entirely to jumping fixtures. I am, however, very pleased to hear that a syndicate is to be started to build a course for summer steeplechasing in the near neighbourhood of Harrow. I hope the plan may succeed, and I have no doubt the National Hunt Committee will readily grant

their permit. Owners may argue that it is hardly possible to train horses in the summer for jumping, but, after a fifty years' experience of the going on the Wiltshire and Berkshire Downs, I can assert with confidence that, given a chalk subsoil, it would be impossible to get the going too hard for jumpers even in the very warmest summer on record.

Very little complaint could be made at the manner in which the weights are adjusted in the big handicaps. At the same time, the gentlemen who have to compile the weights as often as not take risks. They handicap some animals on their worst form, whereas they should do just the opposite. I certainly do think the judge and the starter should come to the assistance of

the handicapper on all occasions. The judge should take a note of all those animals that are purposely kept out of a place, while the starter ought to keep a record of all horses that get badly off, for the benefit of the handicappers of future events. It is a patent fact that these things are all known to the professional backer, who turns them to future profit. Many a certainty has come undone through an animal getting off badly, and the fact has not become public property. Take the case of the Stewards' Cup at Goodwood. It is impossible for those people who wish to see the finish of the race to see the start.

CAPTAIN COE.



HARRY VARDON.



ALEXANDER HERD.

THE PROFESSIONAL GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP AT PRESTWICK (JUNE 8-11): HARRY VARDON FIRST, TOM VARDON SECOND, JACK WHITE THIRD, ALEXANDER HERD FOURTH.

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OUR LADIES' PAGES.

THOUGH everybody knew that the great London Hospital Ball would be a supreme squash except for those who figured picturesquely apart in Mrs. Arthur Paget's quadrilles, yet many sent prudence to the winds and figured forth in bravery that had but just dropped from the dressmaker's needle. Exquisitely pretty and dainty looked many of the girls in their pearl-embroidered tulle gowns of painted mousselines-de-soie or flower-trimmed gauzes, while hardly a head appeared solely in its own brown or golden thatch, but was embellished with flower-wreaths, threaded through with pale-coloured mousseline, or crowned with the glitter of diamonds, of which there was a quite extraordinary display. Fruit as well as flowers was pressed into the service of the coiffure. One amazingly pretty brunette dressed in apricot-coloured gauze wore a coronal of velvet cherries in the pinky-yellow colour of the former fruit. Another had an effective head-dress of bright-crimson mulberries, with a leaf-green tulle frock and a waist-band of diamonds—or did they come from the artistic Parisian Diamond Company? one wondered. The setting and design were daintiness itself.

Amongst the folk of fancy-dress taking part in the quadrilles, Lady Annesley, in Louis Quinze patches, powdered curls, and brocade, was beautiful exceedingly. The high American head-dresses, though entirely becoming, left an impression of "ballets one has seen," but the Russian crowns gave an air of stateliness that none of the others achieved. Mrs. Arthur Paget, all energy and enterprise, worked gallantly to set the lagging processionists going, but a sort of semi-stage-fright appeared at first to intervene amongst the distinguished guests taking part, until some hand-clappings from the expectant onlookers roused them to the occasion's heights. Supper, as stage-managed by the omniscient Benoist, was not at all the hopeless *sauve-qui-peut* it might so easily have become, and every one of the four thousand revellers was more or less regaled with hot quails and strawberries. The forthcoming ball on July 9 promises to be another

overwhelming success, and the five-guinea stage of tickets which has been already reached does not deter people, apparently, from coming in their hundreds to "pay, pay, pay." It will be interesting to know to



[Copyright.]

A VISITING TOILETTE OF BLUE CLOTH.

what extent the London Hospital will benefit by both balls. A record benefaction it will be, surely!

Of lesser entertainments there is the usual Season crop, only more so, and one notices how the smaller dinner-party of eight or ten congenial souls has ousted, in great measure, the formal and somewhat boring assemblage of sixteen and upwards which used to be the all-prevailing mode of giving dinners until lately. Bridge still holds the floor as a primary entertainment, but at houses where the gambling instinct rages less fiercely some good music is usually provided after dinner. A new artiste who, by the way, is making rapid progress as a drawing-room singer is Miss Cecile Talma, a pretty American whose bird-like soprano is often heard at smart parties this Season. Her repertoire includes some original and charming American songs which are very popular, being quite away from and superior to the British ballad of everyday acquaintance.

Lady de Grey has so long been one of the central figures in London and, indeed, Parisian Society that her daughter's marriage was one of wide-reaching interest, as was greatly evidenced by the many distinguished foreigners who attended it, the presence of the King and Queen giving it the highest possible cachet moreover. Her Majesty, dressed entirely in grey, made a very lovely picture, and the bridesmaids' jessamine wreaths improved decisively on the habit of picture-hats, which will now surely become "early Edwardian" and make way for the prettier arriving fashion. Lady Mar and Kellie and Lady Chesterfield, both dressed in white gowns, were noticeable even amongst the many lovely women present, and



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A GARDEN-PARTY GOWN OF CRÊPE-DE-CHINE AND LACE.

Mrs. Lulu Harcourt's frock of much-embroidered heliotrope was a work of intricate and delicately shaded art.

Apropos of white, the chief dressmakers all foretell an Ascot almost entirely frocked in that virginal tone, so many now insisting on it as being the one and only becoming shade. Certainly, it is wonderful to realise how many opposing complexions ivory-white will amiably

enhance, from fairest lily to brownest berry. Very autumnal must be the tint and past all hope the faded cheek that refuse to consort with a gown of creamy lace or crêpe or mousseline.

In this connection a word about the beneficial effects of Clarke's Ammonia on the skin may not be unseasonable. It is a clear fluid-ammonia, and a very little dropped into bath and a few drops into the basin immensely help the cleansing properties of soap-and-water, while in all household matters the purifying process is magically assisted by its use.

Women who are wise in their generation will, moreover, be wary as to the soaps they use for



"DAILY TELEGRAPH" CHALLENGE CUP FOR THE SERPENTINE SWIMMING-CLUB.

toilet purposes. More harm is done by highly perfumed soaps, impregnated also with alkalis and caustic acids, than the most skilled beauty-doctor or complexion specialist can afterwards undo. To know, therefore, of a quite pure soap is to possess knowledge of the most important, and in the category of the most approved is the "Golden Palm" soap lately brought out by Messrs. Raimes and Co., which can now be had anywhere of chemist or grocer; and another soap that can be used with safety is the Vinolia, justly well-known and approved for its good effect on the most delicate skin.

So many people making holiday plans are including Norway, Sweden, and now also Denmark in their list that it will be comforting to know that in the capital of our Queen's native country an excellent hotel, the "d'Angleterre," has just been rebuilt and entirely decorated by Waring's of Oxford Street. Copenhagen has, therefore, been brought into line with other better-known resorts, and globe-trotters will find a Louis Seize palm-court, luxurious bedrooms, and all the other decorative luxuries of the modern hotel with which Messrs. Waring's name is now so universally associated. The simple, homely Danes will have thus an object-lesson in luxury before eyes to which the soft ways of life have been immemorially unfamiliar.

SYBIL.

MR. WILSON BARRETT'S NEW PLAY.

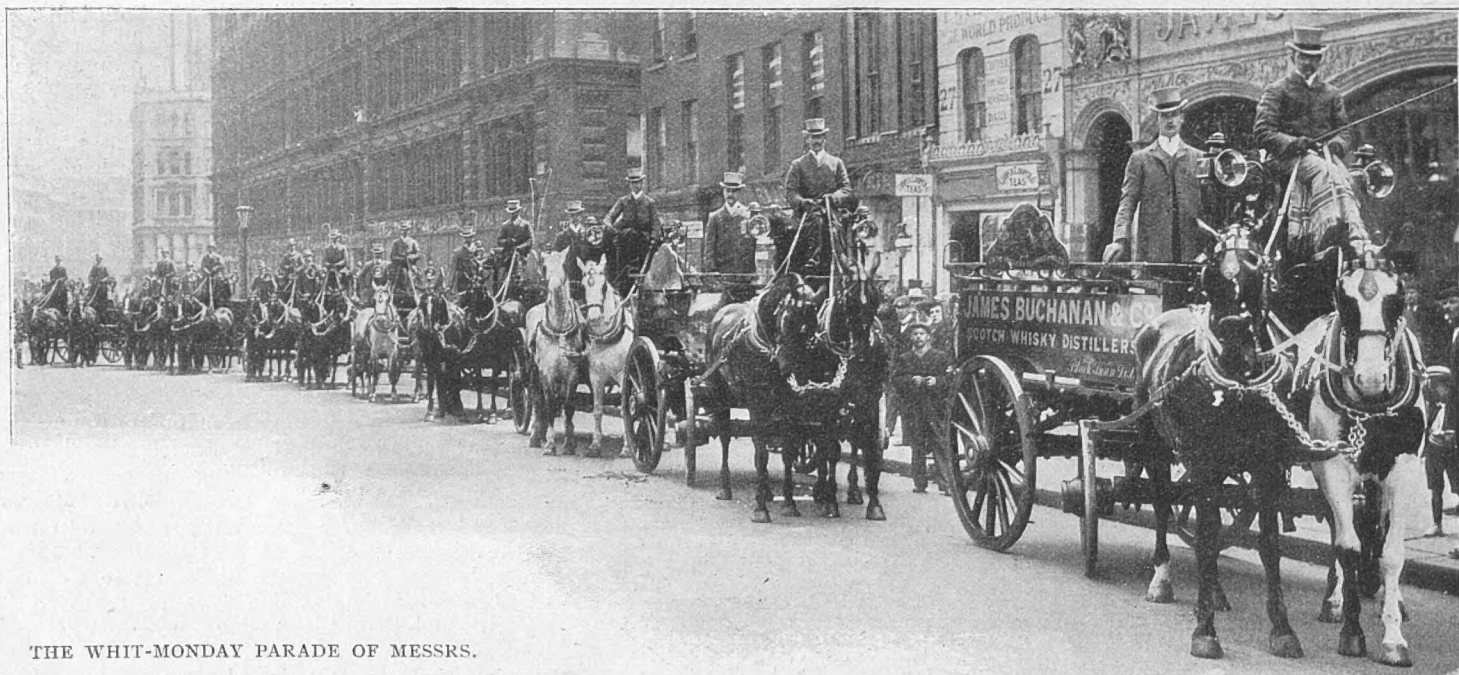
LAST Thursday night, Messrs. Imeson's popular Theatre Royal in the busy town of Middlesbrough was the scene of a very important production. This was Mr. Wilson Barrett's new play, which he originally called "Sock and Buskin," but recently re-named "In the Middle of June." Mr. Barrett's latest venture proved to be of less "serious" import and, indeed, altogether in a much lighter vein than most of his previous dramas, from "The Sign of the Cross" downwards. It is also more picturesque than some of this diligent author-actor-manager's earlier works. As a matter of fact, "In the Middle of June" is a bright "Under the Greenwood Tree" sort of a play and the general "note" of the piece is one of joyousness.

The hero of the piece, played—and splendidly played—by Mr. Barrett, is somewhat oddly named Terence Kanturk Springbourne. He is the "leading man" of a Company of strolling players under the patronage of the Earl of Oxford. When Terence is not engaged in spouting stage-speeches to the playgoers of Shakspeare's County, and what Sam Gerridge calls in "Caste" the "immediate neighbouring vicinity," he busies himself either in dashing wooing the sweet Mistress Ellula Maldon, or in fervently tracking her sister's little boy, who has been basely kidnapped by the villain of the piece. Several excellent acting scenes ensue, principally outside an inn called "The Perfect Woman," inside Master Ringdove's barn, and in Parson Gavell's cottage, before all tangles are properly straightened out and villainy is punished and virtue rewarded. Terence, of course, eventually wins the hand, as he has long won the heart, of the fascinating Ellula. This charming heroine is charmingly played by Miss Lillah McCarthy. To this character is allotted a very novel scene, in which the author shows Ellula "making-up" and "going on" as Juliet in place of the young man who had, of course, been cast for the part. As the "period" of the play is 1601, Mr. Barrett thus ante-dates by some sixty years the appearance of women on the English stage. Mrs. Betterton, who acted with her husband in 1666, is generally supposed to have been the first English actress.

The hard-headed, horny-handed playgoers of Middlesbrough enthusiastically welcomed "In the Middle of June," its author, and its chief players, one of the most successful being Mr. Ambrose Manning as a strolling comedian named Wat Ingleby. I doubt not that, when Mr. Wilson Barrett brings this play to the Metropolis, London playgoers will be every whit as enthusiastic. H. C. N.

The proprietors of the *Daily Telegraph* have presented a handsome Challenge Cup to the Serpentine Swimming Club (which was founded in 1864) for competition in a series of nine races, including a full-costume one. The cup is a two-handled one, with a cover, and was manufactured by J. W. Benson, Limited, of Ludgate Hill.

Lovers of horses who happened to be in Holborn on Whit-Monday morning had a rare treat in the spectacle provided for their delectation by Messrs. James Buchanan and Co., of the Black Swan Distillery. At noon, nine pair-horsed and two one-horsed vans were drawn up, and the superb quality of the horses, the smart get-up of the men, and the general appearance of the vehicles made an eminently pleasing picture. Messrs. Buchanan's stud consists of some three score weight-carrying hunters, carefully selected by Mr. G. B. Manley. Perfectly matched, for the most part, in height and colour, from sixteen to seventeen hands, and up to carrying twenty stone, the average value of each horse is no less than a hundred and thirty guineas.



THE WHIT-MONDAY PARADE OF MESSRS. BUCHANAN'S HORSES: THE PROCESSION IN HOLBORN.

CITY NOTES.

The Next Settlement begins on June 24.

UNPLEASANT TIMES.

WHAT with shutting-down of mines, fears of serious trouble in New York, and the Servian Revolution, things have been none too pleasant upon the Stock Exchange, although the Settlement has passed off with only two small failures. Our warning as to the danger of outsiders dealing in Americans under present



MANDINGO TRIBE, ST. PAUL RIVER, LIBERIA.

The white men are Sir Simeon Stuart, Bart., and Mr. T. Newitt Meyring.

circumstances, has been more than justified by the heavy fall—amounting to almost a panic—on Wednesday and the sharp recovery on the following days. That there is a screw loose somewhere in Wall Street, has been pretty evident to every student of the markets for the past six months. The printing-press has been used too freely in the manufacture of millionaires, and the public on both sides of the Atlantic refuses to exchange its savings for the beautifully lithographed share-certificates with which the strong-boxes of numerous banks and Trust Companies are crammed. Whether the various pawn-shops and finance-houses can or cannot live on their paper, depends upon the public mood during the next few months. Meanwhile, the wise man either jobs in and out, or leaves Yankees alone.

THE LIBERIAN CHARTER.

There are known to this market several Companies who carry on the business of colonisation, exploring, and mining over various parts of the British Empire under Royal Charter, the best-known of which are, of course, the British South Africa Company, and the North Borneo Company; but the latest addition to the Chartered band is the West African Gold Concessions, Limited, which has obtained from the Liberian Government sole mineral rights (including the right to construct railways, establish banks, import free of duty mining-machinery, &c.) over two large districts comprising about half the total area of the Republic.

As everybody knows, Liberia is an independent Republic situated between the French Ivory Coast and Sierra Leone, and was established as a separate State by the freed slaves from America more than half-a-century ago. The Constitution is modelled on that of the United States, and the State exists, and has maintained its independence, by the especial goodwill of Great Britain and the great North American Republic. For many years the country was closed to Europeans, but of late the Government has adopted a more enlightened policy, and is now making every effort to press forward the development of its mineral and trading resources. By an ordinance of the Liberian Government, a Charter was granted to the West African Gold Concessions, Limited, in 1901. The administration of the country over which the exclusive and, it is hoped, valuable rights have been granted, is not in the hands of the Company, but is undertaken by the State Government, which, for its services, is to receive 5 per cent. of the net profits. Since the granting of the Charter, Sir Simeon Stuart has visited the country on behalf of the Company, and Mr. B. A. Wood, a mining expert, has been employed to make a report upon the prospects of payable gold and other minerals existing.

So far, only the fringe of the vast area over which the rights have been granted has been explored, but so favourable have been the reports, that the Consolidated Goldfields of South Africa have determined to take a hand in the deal, and have agreed to send out four expeditions to prospect and explore, in return for which they have the right of either taking up ten thousand acres in various blocks, or one block of one hundred thousand square miles, but the

West African Gold Concessions, Limited, have reserved a one-third interest (after providing for working capital) in all subsidiary Companies formed to develop the land so acquired. One of the Goldfields' expeditions is actually in Liberia engaged in prospecting, and we understand that the West Australian mining magnate, Mr. Frank Gardiner, has an engineer also engaged in prospecting under a somewhat similar contract.

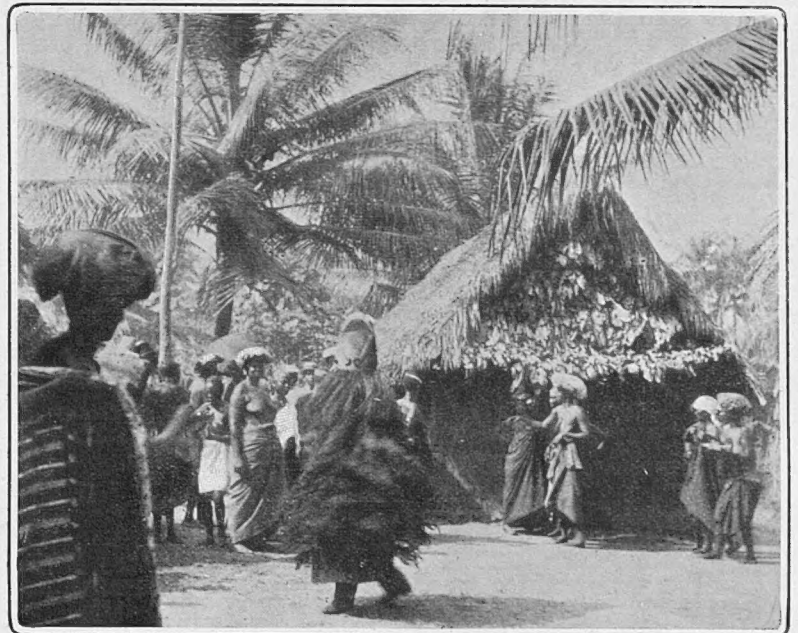
In all these Chartered concerns engaged to explore, prospect, or colonise the waste places of the earth, there must be big risks, and, in the event of success, big profits; nor is the Liberian venture any exception to the rule, but its area is large, it is not burdened with the expense of administering the country, and its capital of £500,000 is moderate, far more moderate for its possibilities, than that of either the North Borneo or British South Africa Companies. The reports as to the highly mineralised nature of the country which have come from every expert who has been on the spot may, of course, prove delusive, but Sir Henry H. Johnston, Sir Gilbert Parker, M.P., and the other Directors of the West African Gold Concessions are capable and honest men, and the buyer of shares will certainly get a run for his money. One or two gold discoveries by the engineers of the Consolidated Goldfields of South Africa would easily put the scrip to a very high premium, and we cannot help thinking that, for the man who is prepared to wait a year or two and to take a risk, there are few more promising gambles than these shares at about 15s. or 16s. each. The Railway, Banking, and other monopolies covered by the Charter, may be of comparatively little immediate value, but successful mining would soon make them into assets of incalculable worth, probably of more value than the minerals themselves.

THE LOAN SPECIAL SETTLEMENT.

Now that the special settlement in the Transvaal Loan has become a thing of the past, and the price of the scrip is 20 per cent. paid, there should begin that movement towards a more substantial premium which the excellence of the stock fairly deserves. The plethora of gilt-edged investments which now exists in the Home Railway and Colonial Markets is, of course, one drawback to the prospects of improvement. On the other side of the sheet is to be seen a probable reduction of the Bank Rate to 3 per cent—we wonder incidentally what effect such a step would have upon the injudicious Berlin Bank Directors—and this should exert a favourable influence over all the stocks which are in closest touch with Consols. For instance, a 3 per cent. Bank Rate would probably have the effect of inducing people to withdraw the money which they have been leaving on deposit at their bankers', in order to employ the capital at more remunerative rates in the Stock Exchange. Such securities as India Three per Cents, Goschens, Local Loans, and the Transvaal Loan stand nearest the throne of the Banker's deposit-receipts, and will probably attract a large proportion of the money that is likely to be set free. Of such stocks the one that in old days would have secured the greatest amount of attention is undoubtedly Consols, but the wonderful advertisement that was secured by the Transvaal Loan in connection with its issue still bulks largely in the public eye, and there will probably be a diversion from Consols in favour of the latest comer. We adhere to our view that the price of the stock is worth between 103 and 105, to which level, in course of time, it will certainly approximate.

HOME RAILS.

Great is the grumbling directed against the Home Railway Market by those who look to good traffics and brighter dividend prospects for an advance in quotations. Although there has been a fair recovery



DEVIL DANCE, VI TRIBE, LIBERIA.

The costumed figure is the High Priestess of the tribe, who has power of life and death.

from the worst prices touched in the flurry just antecedent to the last Settlement, yet there is no real return of public interest to the market, and it is not surprising that some of the holders ask, in despair, whether there ever will be. The answer to such depressing apprehensions is that a reaction will come in course of time, as inevitably as it does to every other department of the Stock Exchange. An all-round revival of business activity is, perhaps, still a thing of the future, but the best of the Home Railway stocks will not go much lower, and most of the conditions point to the possibility of a gradual appreciation of the stock-holders' property. It must be admitted that members of the Stock Exchange frankly declare that their clients are afraid of investing their money in securities which seem to be always falling, but much the same argument has been applicable to nearly all the other markets round the House during the past few years. Of course, if we have a General Election, Home Railway stocks are likely to remain in their present state of stagnation for some time to come, because a call to the hustings would mean the transference of all public interest to politics, and finance would probably be left out in the cold. As we showed a few weeks ago, the dividend prospects for the principal Lines are distinctly good, and next month should see improved distributions in the majority of cases, but we rather doubt whether anything but sensational announcements will have much effect over prices in the present apathetic state of the market.

AND YANKEES.

Many speculators who have been badly bitten in the past over Yankee Rails and who have forsworn dealing in that department in the future, are glancing back in their old love's direction and canvassing the views of their brokers as to the possibilities presented by the present low range of prices. The brokers themselves are the first to acknowledge that their views deserve little more weight than those of any dispassionate student of the market, who, looking on from a distance, often obtains a truer perspective than do those who live in the midst of excitement day by day. But amongst all classes interested in the American Market there is a growing impression that the worst is over, and that anybody with pluck sufficient to face a further few dollars' drop may emerge very much on top if he buys Yankees now and keeps them, whatever happens. Putting aside the purely gambling counters, such dividend-paying shares as Denver Preference, Pennsylvania, and Louisville, to quote just three examples, have had a tremendous fall, and are all likely to recover in the near future. Rumours as to the financial stability of a particularly prominent Yankee financier may be relegated to the

garden of the bears, and, while recognising the temptation that still lies open to the ursine brigade, we lean to the belief that a bull campaign will take the field before very long.

SOME REPORTS.

The Mint, Birmingham, is one of those provincial manufacturing Companies the Board of which have always taken a conservative line in regard to financial management. The result is eminently satisfactory. The accounts for the year ended March 31 show that, after allowing £2656 for repairs and renewals, the net profit was £14,831. Of this, £2906 is absorbed by Debenture and mortgage interest, £1515 is devoted to depreciation, and £2000 is added to reserve, after which the Directors can declare a dividend of 10 per cent. for the year and carry forward £2825. Including this sum, the accumulations amount to £68,825, as against a share capital of £80,000.

The sixth annual report of J. W. Benson, Limited, is also pleasant reading. For the year ending March 31 a net sum of £57,941 has been earned, enabling the Board to meet all prior charges, add £5000 to the reserve, pay 10 per cent. on the Ordinary shares, and carry forward £12,859 to the next account. The 5 per cent. Pref. shares of this Company are just the class of security that many people want; they are cumulative, only £12,500 is required to pay the dividend, and ever since the Company has been established it has never made less than four times the necessary amount.

Saturday, June 13, 1903.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Only letters on financial subjects to be addressed to the "City Editor, The Sketch Office, 198, Strand."

Our Correspondence Rules are published on the first Wednesday in each Month.

LINCOLN.—Your broker seems to have charged the ordinary rates. It is true that several touts profess to do business without charging any commission, but you had better avoid them, for it is certain they do not carry on business as philanthropists and will rob you to make up for it.

AMATEUR.—The photos have been returned to you, as they would not be of any use to us.

E. P.—See Notes in our last issue under the heading of "A List of Investments."

AMY.—It is impossible within the limits of an answer to explain why securities rise and fall, and how dealing upon the Stock Exchange is carried on. Buy an elementary book, like "How to Read the Money Article," by Charles Duguid.



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